
PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS

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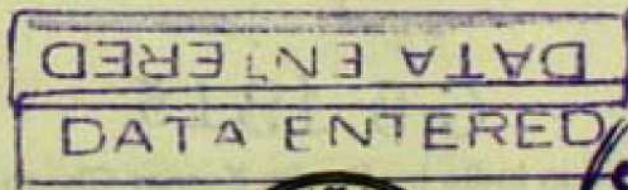
Rasvihary Das
1894 - 1973



RASVIHARY DAS

PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS ✓

Edited
With An Introduction and A Biographical Note
by
RAMAPRASAD DAS
Secretary, The Indian Academy of Philosophy



University of Calcutta



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Senate House, Calcutta 700 073

RASVIAHARY DAS

PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS

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With An Introduction and A Biographical Note

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*In Memory
of
Chandrodaya Bhattacharya
who for about five decades nurtured
The Indian Academy of Philosophy
founded by
Rasvihary Das*

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Whatever may be the case with geniuses and really original minds, we ordinary workers in the field of philosophy must always turn to the masters, not only for our proper training, but for continuous enlightenment.

Unless in collusion with some religious dogma or some other deep-seated prejudice, a philosophical theory, resting on intellectual grounds alone, can never claim absolute certainty.

I cannot regard these ideals [Truth, Freedom and Love] as subjective fancies; they present themselves to my consciousness as objective, as veritable determinants of my rational being, and feel bound to recognise them as supremely real in some sense.

— Rasuihary Das



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RASVIHARY DAS : AN INTRODUCTION

1

Published on the occasion of Rasvihary Das Birth Centenary Celebrations under the auspices of the Indian Academy of Philosophy, Calcutta, this volume includes some of the many philosophical essays of Professor Das—a polyglot, an intellectual reformer and a down-to-earth philosopher. Das has been widely acclaimed for his commitment to the rigours of logic, his atheistic and sceptical views, and his courage of conviction, and open-mindedness. He was known for his natural inclination for moderation, his philosophical insight, and his strong opposition to all forms of arrogant dogmatism and extremism—and to all kinds of irrationalism, such as institutional religion, religious fanaticism, communalism and castism. This great scholar was at the same time admired for his serene diction—a model of lucidity, incisiveness and clarity.

[Rasvihary Das deserves to be referred to simply as Rasvihary, for, in his words, "in India we traditionally refer to our great men by their proper names, not by their surnames as is done in modern Europe". But chained as we are to the shackles of "a legacy of Western influence in our culture" we shall refer to him not as Rasvihary but by his surname (see footnote to Essay 22.)]

'Clarity is not Enough' – so goes the title of a famous book. I, for one, would prize Das's writings for their sparkling clarity, if not for anything else. "There are only a few writers who can give lucid expression to their difficult thoughts" says Das in Essay 23, and I have no doubt that Das is one of those few writers, while, incidentally, K.C.Bhattacharya and Whitehead are not. I refer to the

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latter because Das tried his best to throw light on these two great thinkers; but even his uncommon gift of making difficult and abstruse thoughts comprehensible even to the laity was not exactly upto the task of illuminating the blind-spots in them – the heart of darkness. [The essays on K.C.Bhattacharya and Whitehead – Essays 22–26 – seem to lack the crystalline quality that pervades other essays.]

Lest you accuse me of overstatement about Das's brilliant gift of verbal exposition, I call upon the perceptive and serious reader, not initiated into the rudiments of Indian philosophy, to go through the essay entitled 'Relations in Modern Indian Logic' [Essay 15] where we find discussed some of the most sophisticated and abstruse (even esoteric, one could say) concepts alien to Western thought and far away from ordinary or scientific usage : relations like *samavāya*, *kalikasambandha*, *svarupa sambandha*, *pariāpati*, *avacchedekatā*, and *tādātmya*. I am sure, one will testify that at no stage did one falter, encounter any difficulty or fail to grasp what was attempted to explain. Consider, for instance, the last of the above relations *tādātmya*, and see how simply but convincingly he defends 'A is A' : "We think that 'A is not A' cannot be true. But it can be false only if it can be validly contradicted by another proposition which can only be 'A is A' ". The illumining explanation of such alien ideas—alien to Western conceptual scheme and intellectual climate, expressed in an alien language seems to have been possible as if by a magic : the magic wand in Das's hands being just a self-acquired ability to weave simple English words of common usage into a network eminently suited to capture abstruse ideas. The result of Das's intellectual labour involved in explaining highly technical concepts and jargons in ordinary language idioms certainly adds an extra dimension to our thoughts mostly moulded in the Western tradition; and we should all be grateful to him.

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I purposely spoke of the heart of darkness [though Das spoke of "the heart of reality"]. Darkness is something ubiquitous, not to be found only in the deep recesses of the Congo; whatever place or subject you choose to explore fully, it is there. Obviously I sought an opportunity to introduce the great author of the great story [*Heart of Darkness*], Joseph Conrad. But why?

It is to be kept in view that Das had a life-long interest in English culture (perhaps more in the literature of the English than in their philosophy) and literary personalities, from Shakespeare down to his own contemporaries – Joseph Conrad, Hilaire Belloc, Arnold Bennett, E. M. Forster, G. L. Dickinson, and H. A. L. Fisher. ["He is not properly educated/cultured who has not gone through Fisher's *History of Europe*", he once told a postgraduate student of philosophy (that was me) who had not till then read the book. Notice what Das as a teacher would expect of a student of philosophy]. I name them because in moments of relaxation, Das used to speak of these contemporaries of his with obvious relish. But he was especially interested in Conrad's writings and had a soft spot for him. In this, as in many other respects, I find a striking parallel between Das and Russell: if Russell's lover Ottoline Morrell is right "Russell revered Conrad more than any other living writer. . . ." and right she certainly was. We know that Russell named both his sons 'Conrad' [see Ray Monk, *Bertrand Russell : The Spirit of Solitude*, pp. 308, 316]. But to go back to the question: Why Conrad of all his contemporaries? Was it because he took the heart of darkness as a challenge and wanted to get down to the nub of what may be called cosmic ignorance, *ajñāna* of the advaitists and illumine it as did Conrad in the deepest recesses of the Congo river? No, to my mind, what impressed him most was not Conrad's stories and novels which focussed the mariner's searchlights on the dark sea

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of the human mind, but the amazing fact that a Pole "gained recognition as a master of English prose" [Webster's Biographical Dictionary]. What perhaps stirred Das's imagination was the question : if a Polish seaman working in merchant marine can start teaching himself English not before he was 21 and make himself a master of the English language, why can't a Bengali youth of Sylhet achieve mastery over the language?

That my guesswork is not merely a fanciful speculation will be borne out by this incident. Being told that I was even in my college days an avid reader of Conrad, Das had asked me : But do you know that your favourite author is not an Englishman [in fact, I did not]? The fact of Conrad's not being an Englishman by birth must have fired Das's imagination, and strongwilled as he always was, he must have in his early life thrown himself heart and soul into the task of mastering English, like Conrad "working ambitiously and uncompromisingly in a foreign language, hewing words as a miner hews at a coalface" [Cedric Watts in Introduction to the Penguin edition of *Lord Jim*] (while grappling with Greek, Latin, German, French, Arabic, Persian and some Indian languages). That he succeeded immensely will indisputably be supported by the essays in this volume. Incidentally if my memory (at 80) does not betray me, it was in a review in a noted English journal [was it *Mind*?] of the book which contained the essay *The Theory of Ignorance in Advaitism* [Essay 13], the reviewer himself an Englishman, showering praises on the essay, observed that an Englishman would justly envy Das for his English. Prof. George Burch of the Tuft University says "His English works [are] written in a fine literary style" and speaking of *The Essentials of Advaitism* which is free translation of the Vedanta classic *Naiskarmyasiddhi* by Sankara's disciple Suresvara, he observes:[the book is]

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Authentic because by Suresvara and *clear because by Das*

where the clause that we have italicized almost equates Das with clarity, says in effect – a writing is either clear or it is not by Das.

[Review of Metaphysics, Vol X, No 1, 1956, p. 142]

2

Here is a highly significant and penetrative observation of Prof. Burch which pinpoints a truth about Das's philosophical development :

Professor Das's philosophy has passed through two stages, a youthful speculative stage and a mature analytical stage. The youthful speculative stage has its fullest expression in the book *The Self and The Ideal*. This work although developed in Western concepts, is clearly within the Vedanta tradition, but it is an original theory which eludes classification in any of the traditional Vedanta schools. [ibid]

The essays included in this volume all belong to "the mature stage of Professor Das's philosophy".

The essays are sorted into five sets as the fly-leaves will show. Their arrangement defies, I am afraid, all canons of logic. Thus the first one could have been placed under a separate head : My Philosophical Development. Clearly what lies behind the division is convenience, though some family resemblance will be noticed among the essays stitched with a fly-leaf as their frontispiece. Under 'Other Men's Thoughts' we assembled strange bedfellows, K. C. Bhattacharya and Whitehead. I take this opportunity to put on record Das's opinion about K. C. Bhattacharya. Once, when he was speaking of the greatness, "the acuteness and subtlety" of Bhattacharya, perhaps seeing

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an incredulous look in my eyes, he had told me rebukingly: though not a celebrity in the West, as a thinker Bhattacharya undoubtedly stands comparison with your Russell or Moore.

For those who are interested in the Vedanta, Das's brilliant account of Shankara [Essay 12] is an indispensable reading, a 'must'; and those who want to know more about Whitehead I shall refer rather to that "little golden book" [an expression I borrow from a reviewer in an English journal] *The Philosophy of Whitehead*, published years ago in England, — the book that, temporally considered, is second, I believe, only to the one by Dorothy Emmet [see 'Books on Whitehead' in the article *Whitehead* by Emmet in Paul Edwards's *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*].

[From the Preface of the book: I know Miss Emmet has already published an excellent book on the philosophy of Professor Whitehead. But I believe my treatment will be found somewhat different from hers, and besides I have dealt with certain topics which are not touched in her book. In any case two books certainly cannot be considered too many on so great a philosopher as Professor Whitehead]. If my surmise is correct, what kindled Das's imagination and goaded him on was Conrad, but he was profoundly influenced by the Nyaya realists as by the British empiricists and realists in general [in his words "by their greater clarity"] and obviously more so by Russell who represents the perfection of English prose. The maverick in Russell, i.e., Russell in his social and political and ethical writings was not, however, acceptable to Das, generally conservative in attitude to social and moral affairs; for Russell's views on such matters seem sometimes extremist, unbalanced and impractical. But Das took *Principia Mathematica*, *The Principles of Mathematics* and *Mathematical Philosophy* very seriously, and in his

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younger days, when he was in the Institute of Philosophy at Amalner, delivered a course of lectures at the Calcutta University on mathematical logic – logic developed mostly in the *Principia*. Years ago, in the Forties, a youthful arrogant half-baked Marxist [that was me] told him to his face : I don't understand your Hegel and the Hegelians [why, I could not even finish reading Roman Rolland's *The Life of Ramkrishna*]. Without losing his composure at the audacity of the speaker, he said calmly :

You don't understand because you do not want to. Don't you see that to understand is not necessarily to accept? You can't understand unless you have some intellectual sympathy and will to understand what the author of the view [that you have already decided unthinkingly to reject] has to say. Unless you grasp what your imagined opponent has to say what will you reject? Don't you know, Marx honestly and zealously tried to understand Hegel and accepted what he thought living in Hegel? Young man, see to it that your atheistic zeal and political faith does not blind you to truth.

This seemed at the time a puzzling utterance made by a confirmed atheist.

Now with my iconoclastic zeal subdued and mellowed by age, I realize (while mourning over a wasted youth) that what Das told me about understanding a view and assenting to it is a gospel truth which should serve as a motto for every student of philosophy. You will not fail to notice, I am sure, how Das attempts at making intelligible [in Essay 11, the Falsity of the World] the thesis, which he rejects, that the world is false. I am lost in wonder when I reread the essays and try to work out the enormously long time [when a part of it had to be spent for attempting to master about thirteen languages] he must have devoted not only towards giving his own philosophy a coherent

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shape but also in trying benevolently to understand other men's views [Navya Nyāya, Vedanta texts, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Whitehead, K. C. Bhattacharya, Russell of the *Principia* are not, need I remind, just child's play] and what mental tension, devotion and dedication were required to grasp highly abstruse views not consonant to the inquirer's mental make-up.

To take some examples. Das rejected [he would not, I am sure, have himself used such a strong word] advaitism [Essay 11-14], the theory of ignorance [Essay 13], the view that the world is illusory [Essay 11]. But he must have wandered with painstaking care for years through the labyrinths that constitute *Ajñāna* or the Vedanta and tried his best to have the hidden treasure (supposing it was there) revealed — all the time scrupulously holding in leash his sceptical and atheistic views.

3

Of the essays that centre upon the Vedanta, *The theory of Ignorance in Advaitism* deserves special mention— it discusses the subjective as well as the objective view of *ajñāna* and raises questions about the ultimate basis and philosophical status of *Ajñāna*. Many eminent scholars Eastern and Western have written on *Ajñāna*, but I have yet to see an exposition, defence or critique of the theory that excels or equals this essay which, I am confident, will perennially stand out as a model of clarity and perspicacity. Here is presented in a non-technical language the astounding dialectical argumentation (call it sophistry if you like) of Shankara whose dialectical skill surpasses, think, that of, say Zeno and Bradley; and here it is a sight to see how Das uses his own dialectical weapon to fight valiantly and, I am inclined to believe, not without success, a giant of the stature of Shankara. This essay, the one on Shankara and 'The Falsity of the World' [Essays 11, 12

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and 13] is to my mind not only excellent reading, but an indispensable study especially for those of us who have not had the opportunity to read Vedanta texts with some competent pundits.

One wonders how it was possible for a professed realist to give such a perspicuous, almost a believer's, account of *Ajñāna* even though the theory is not acceptable to him. This way of showing the opponent in the best possible light, of placing oneself in the position of the opponent, Das must have learnt not only from Socrates, but also from the various commentators on Nyaya and Vedanta— intellectual giants, near at hand, like Raghunatha, Jagadisha, Gadadhara, and others. His attitude is well reflected in the following move: "I shall try to put these objections [to my view of Empirical Self] as strongly as I can" [p. 271]. Das has absolutely no doubt that the advaita point of view is wrong, yet he has the greatest respect for Shankara as a mystic and religious teacher, even as a philosopher ["He was undoubtedly a great philosopher with a very acute and critical mind. . . . Shankara's philosophy bears comparison with some of the highly respectable philosophies of the West". pp. 176, 170] But Das, though always a sympathetic inquirer bent on discovering merits in others' point of view and always disposed not to make any strong statement, is not a man to mince words— he openly addresses an audience consisting mainly of believers and advaitist at heart with these challenging words : Shankara "is not a philosopher in the modern sense— in the sense of a free rational thinker" He seems to have said the last word when he declared—

Advaitism is not philosophy in the ordinary modern sense, a wholly free rational enquiry without any commitment or presupposition, an adventure of ideas

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with a view to discovering the ultimate truth For Advaitism truth has already been found in the Upanishads. What is left for Advaitic philosophy to do is to defend this truth against hostile criticism . . . [p. 164]

The following quotation from Essay 23 (where Das criticises K. C. Bhattacharya) will show how relieved the logician and realist in Das is to find out a way of hedging against the Vedantic conclusion.

If in philosophy we cannot go beyond what logic demands and can reasonably admit only those categories in terms of which we can *think*, and if further, we have not got, or do not admit, or at least do not like to utilise, any spiritual consciousness other than the logical or thinking one, then for philosophy at least the advaitin's doubt in the reality of the world or his characterisation of it as neither real nor unreal is quite inadmissible. [p. 344]

It must not however be forgotten that Das had a life-long interest in advaitism and Shankara (as in Kant and Kantianism) though not for a moment did he turn an advaitist (or a Kantian). It may even be said that literally he began with advaitism and ended with Shankara — his first published work was *The Essentials of Advaitism* [The Punjab Sanskrit Series, Lahore, 1931] and the last one written in the last years of his life was *An Introduction to Shankara* [Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta 1968]

His deep attachment to advaitism and Shankara seems to defy explanation. Could it not be attributed, one might fancy, to the belief that the strong hold that advaitism has on the Indian people acts as an impediment to clear thinking and social progress, and lures people away from

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morality to religion, and to the belief that it is one's intellectual duty to try to loosen the stranglehold of this pernicious philosophy? No, certainly not. Because philosophy for Das is an autonomous spiritual activity whose object is to acquire knowledge for its own sake. Most likely he was attracted by the uncompromising and invulnerable logic of the Vedanta, even though this unassailable weapon is used in defence of some supposedly revealed 'truths' — truths believed to be enshrined in the Upanishads.

The Falsity of the World begins thus :

'The World is false'. This astounding statement is made by advaitism in all seriousness and some very sensible people seem to believe it quite honestly [p. 133]

The use of "astounding" shows Das's attitude, and as expected, he rejects the view—"The statement has no intelligible meaning" he declares. But as prone he always is to attempt seriously to grasp others' point of view, to discover merit, if there be any in what the opponent says, he adds as the concluding lines of this essay [Essay 11] the following :

I can, however, well imagine a level of spiritual exaltation from which the whole material world may be realised not only as a thing of no importance, but as altogether lost to spiritual sight.. [p. 143]

Das is a hardened atheist, and hence Vedantic theism [Essay 14] is of necessity anathema to him. Yet he has some constructive suggestions for those who worship God but profess advaitism. Thus he says with remarkable aplomb —

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if the beliefs and practices of ordinary Vedantists are to be justified ... the absolute non-duality of the ultimate principle will have to be given up. *Ajñāna* will have to be taken in all seriousness as a constitutive principle of the world, or at least as the creative energy of God. [pp. 224-225]

Das rarely draws any parallel between Indian philosophical theories and the Western ['Bradley and Shankara' is a remarkable exception]. It will be noticed, we may say here parenthetically, that he is averse to exhibition of learning and takes particular care not to burden his delightfully buoyant essays with quotations, references (and footnotes). The essay on Generalisation in Indian Philosophy [Essay 16] is distinctive in that it contains citations from Sanskrit texts and also references to Bradley, Bosanquet, Johnson and Russell. It is a very readable account of the Nyaya-Vaisesika, Bauddha and Mimamsa views about *vyapti*. His own view is that "we have to understand the universality of connexion [if it is to be based on experience] as limited to the extent of our experience. It is universal as far as our experience goes". [p. 256]

4

It is often said that the more we learn the more we realize how little have we learned, that all our knowledge brings us nearer to ignorance (is it not T.S.Eliot who said this?). This generalisation we find rarely instantiated; on the contrary we have the sad experience of seeing many a 'learned man' turning know-all, presumptions, conceited and close-minded. But Das is a pleasant surprise — a delightful embodiment of the said truth. Inconceivable as it may sound, here is an old professor who writes: the materials of this essay ['Sunya O Brahma'—included in the collection of essays '*Katipaya Darsanik Prabandha*'] have



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been taken from the doctoral dissertation of one of my students ['Nagarjuna and Shankara, by Ms Karuna Bhattacharyya currently Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Finance) Calcutta University]. Das's humility is writ large in the very first utterance with which the volume begins :

I am not a philosopher if by "a philosopher" is meant one who has achieved a well-reasoned systematic view ...

I am a philosopher only in the modest sense that I take interest in some of the problems discussed by recognised philosophers of the past and the present day.

Again, says Das,

My critical reflection, probably because it is neither deep nor sufficiently critical, has left my commonsense beliefs more or less unaffected.

Again, modest to a fault, Das says :

It is no shame for me to admit that I am largely an ignorant man I am somehow gropingly finding my way through life.

Professor Burch who was an admirer of Das once told me, when he was in India, that he found a curious parallel between Das and Duns Scotus. What he said in support of his findings I cannot recall now. Perhaps he was impressed by the following facts. Though for monks in general, philosophy is a handmaid to theology used in the explication and defence of the data of revelation, many theologians, Duns Scotus in particular, "assumed that philosophy as a work of reason unaided by faith played an autonomous role and had a competence of its own" [A.B. Wolter in Paul Edward's *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*]. Again, Duns Scotus believed in the reality of universals.



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"The universals are not fictions of the intellect, as in such a case they could never predicate anything about an outer object ..." [Anton Dumitriu : *History of Logic*]. Das also had on various occasions advocated the view that philosophy is an autonomous activity; he also maintained more importantly that the ideals are real and eternal in some sense — they are to quote Das "supremely real having supreme importance in the scheme of things". But it is perhaps wrong to draw a parallel between Das and Duns Scotus, and unfair to both, if for nothing else, at least for the fact that while Duns Scotus was a Fransiscan monk, Das was an atheist to the core and totally opposed to all forms of institutional religion.

I rather find some remarkable parallel between Das and Moore. The analogue holds at least in two important respects. Das's philosophy, like that of Moore, is clearly what is called commonsense realism — in Das's case realism sharpened by scepticism. Again, this is more important, Das's belief that ideals, especially what he calls "the three forms of the Good" are somehow real and eternal resembles closely Moore's famous thesis that goodness is a non-natural quality. But why speculate? Here we have Das himself speaking.

I like to describe my view as commonsense realism in distinction from certain other forms of realism. The distinction is based on my view of perception... in perception I seem to cognise directly an object with a certain character.

I am inclined to think that it [scepticism] is irrefutable, and should be recognised as a valuable element in our life and thought .

Paradoxically, if a little loosely, I may say, I believe and, therefore I doubt.

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I cannot regard these ideals [Truth, Freedom, and Love] as subjective fancies; [so] I may be called a practical idealist.

According to Das, philosophy is
an affair of knowledge, such as science and history.
. . . it is teachable by rational means,
and

philosophy is not mysticism and is not a matter of intuition,

but, to repeat, a matter of knowledge.

5

The essays were published about 50-60 years ago, but none of them even now bears any mark of aging – they are as vivacious and sparkling as they were [which only shows that Das was ahead of his time]; the essays would have been greeted with applause had they been published today for the first time. True, you do not, and obviously cannot, find here in his *Epistemological Reflections*, the names of *our* contemporaries or even the names of the philosophers of the recent past – say, Ayer, Gettier, Hintikka, Malcolm, Chisholm, Goldman or the problems that plagued them. True, but the problems that Das raised and tried to solve were always there – problems as old as philosophy. Not only the essays have not grown old, I am of the view that the set of essays put under the title *Epistemological Reflections* is an excellent prolegomenon for beginners and should take its rightful place as propedeutic to higher studies in the theory of knowledge.

In what follows I shall try to give a brief account of Das's theory of knowledge; I shall dwell especially on the negative aspects – on what he did not believe.

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First, in conformity with the tradition in Indian philosophy Das uses "knowledge" in a sense in which "false knowledge" is not a contradiction in terms ["I hold, following a very common usage, that knowledge may be either true or false". p. 7. "A false knowledge is also knowledge". p. 95]. He denies the possibility of our having *a priori* knowledge of objects, as well as the Kantian view that forms of understanding are only ways of knowing and not features of objects [Essay 4]. He rejects unconditionally, in very strong terms which is not his wont, also the claim of intuition as a source of knowledge [ibid]. For him the relation of knowledge and its object is neither internal (as supposed by the idealist), nor external (as the realist suppose) : "The relation is quite unique and can be described as that of having an object (*visayātā*)" [Essay 6]. But the robust uncompromising realist in Das urges him immediately to add "the object owes nothing to knowledge" [ibid].

There was a time when Das believed that "knowledge" is synonymous with 'consciousness' and hence indefinable. [Essay 4]. But coming to see that error and illusion also are states of consciousness but not knowledge, he abandoned the view and tended to define knowledge as "a mode of consciousness in which we are aware of an object as it is" [ibid]. He, however, finds "no radical difference between belief and knowledge"—all our knowledge being "always theoretically open to doubt" [Essay 5]. A serious student of Kant, (though not a Kantian) Das insists that knowledge is not possible without imagination, that "even sensible appearance requires imagination" [Essay 8]. His view about our knowledge of physical objects, which he seeks to establish by repudiating Stout, is that "we directly know physical object in sense-experience" [Essay 7]. Regarding self-knowledge or self-consciousness, he is of the view that to say that I know an

object is to say that it is I who am knowing. As he says : when I know anything I know that I know it. The fact that I know that I know is revealed and involved in the primary fact that I know. [Essay 8]. This means that according to Das the fact of self-consciousness “does not involve the necessity of turning the subject into an object. The self”, he insists, “cannot be known merely by itself. The self can be known, if at all, only in its conscious functions” which is an objective function i.e. one that refers to an object. [Essay 10]

Two essays almost on the same topic [Essay 9 and 10] have been included in this volume. What prompted us to do this is to give an illustration of how one may look at the same thing from different perspectives. [This may remind one of G. L. Dickinson's *A Modern Symposium*—a book much liked by Das as by Russell (see *Autobiography* of Bertrand Russell pp. 186-188)]

6

Self-in-itself, logical construction, appearance, sensum and proposition as a neutral entity – all these Das seems to think are fictions in some sense or other, while taken as aspects of things, or thing-in-relation, self, proposition and sensum are not. Logical construction [that Ayer speaks of] Das thinks is almost exclusively concerned with translatability of certain sentences. And he easily traps Ayer by making him confront a dilemma: “the original sentences are either intelligible by themselves or they are not. If they are not intelligible, they cannot possibly be translated, and if they are intelligible to what end should we take the trouble of translating them.” [Essay 19]. Again, “there is no standing neutral entity like a proposition” which is neither subjective, nor objective, nor linguistic. Das does not, however, do away with proposition as Quine, for instance, does. A proposition for him is something that

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"stands for certain aspects of fact or certain objective entities". [Essay 21]. Appearance whether you conceive it in the Bradleyian or Shankarite fashion, or even if it be taken as a *sensum* is "nothing in reality", not a genuine metaphysical idea. [Essay 17]. Das wrote during the heyday of the sense data theory [during the period extending, say, from Russell and Moore through Broad, Price, and Stout to Austin] and so as expected, the theme of sense data recurs in his essays again and again [Essays 7, 17, 19, 20], they are, he thinks, neither physical nor mental nor logical, and in a sense non-entities. But when he says that "to experience a particular *sensum* ... is to know a physical object with a sensible character" [Essays 7, 17] he seems to have an inkling of what has recently come to be called the adverbial view, as opposed to the act-object view of sense data.

Opposing the Sankhya and Vedanta theory of pure self, Das tries to demonstrate that such a self is a fiction. In his words,

The self is never found in utter isolation from the rest of the world . . . like a thing-in-itself a man in himself is never to be found. [pp. 267, 268]

I wish to draw the reader's attention to the essay on the Nature of the Empirical Self, and the one on Appearance; they are, among others, a standing tribute to Das's dialectical skill and the extraordinary ability to probe deep.

The last essay in the present group [Essay 20] which may be read along with the essay on Logical Construction is an incisive critique not exactly of logical positivism but of Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic*. Almost everything that Ayer proposes or discusses in the book is commented on and fairly assessed in this essay within the limitation of only five pages. According to Das's evaluation though Ayer displayed "a good deal of ingenuity and subtlety. . he does



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not seem to realise fully the profound significance which the philosophical problems have for certain minds". If the thought represented in the book is, as Russell said in reviewing the book, the offspring of the marriage of empiricism and mathematical logic, then Das observes, the marriage was "anything but legitimate". For

If sense-experience is the only source of knowledge and the ultimate court of appeal in a dispute about meaning, as empiricism would have it, we fail to see how we can grant even the possibility of the science of logic. [p. 321]

7

Thus far it has been plain sailing. But now are vast dark seas ahead [named Other Men's Thoughts], waterway that seem to lead into the heart of an immense darkness [after Conrad] and the tiny vessel that is me is in no wise seaworthy. It will be doing injustice to Das as to my intellectual honesty to set sail for the fearsome seas that are Krishnachandra and Whitehead. I therefore leave it to young plucky explorars to forge ahead and collect the treasures [if there be any] lying on the seabeds, or to repeat the refrain, to voyage into the heart of the Congo rivers — Krishnachandra and Whitehead.

8

We are sorry that the following essays, among others, could not be included in this volume —

1. Bradley and Shankara

— familiar to all students of Calcutta University who did their M. A. in the Fifties and Sixties

2. Some Theories of Error in Indian Philosophy

— an excellent exposition and a balanced assessment of the various theories of error, and



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two presidential addresses at the Indian Philosophical Congress, viz.

3. In Defence of Substance

— address of the President, Logic and Metaphysics Section

4. What is Philosophy

— address of the General President.

The editors and publishers of journals and anthologies from which the essays are collected will surely be glad to find the old brittle and dilapidated sheets at the mercy of time and termites resurrected in new reprint substantially bound between hard covers. Copies of some of the essays gathered here we have had from the personal gleaning of Benoy Sengupta – a student of Das [of mine also] whose untimely death I take this opportunity to mourn.

In what follows we shall, for saving space, use these abbreviations : Ajñāna = Ajñāna : The Theory of Ignorance, Luzac, London 1933, The Calcutta Review = CR, Contemporary Indian Philosophy, Allen & Unwin, London Vol. 2, 1952 = CIP, The Journal of The Indian Academy of Philosophy, Calcutta = JIAP, The Philosophical Quarterly, Amalner = PQ, Essay = E. We shall omit "Vol." and "No" of periodicals; thus for, say, "Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. X, No. 2" We shall write : PQ X, 2. The essays included in this volume first appeared in the following books and journals.

"E1 : CIP; E2 : JIAP, XI, 1, 1972; E3 : JIAP IV, 182, 1965
E4 : PQ January 1945; E5 : XIV, 1, January 1938; E6 : IX, 2, July 1933, E7 : The Monist XLII, 2, April 1932, E8 : PQ XIX, 1, April 1943, E10 : PQ XV, 2, July 1939, E11 : PQ, July 1943, E12 : JIAP, VI, 1&2, 1967, E13 : Ajñāna, E14 : PQ V, 1, 1929, E15 : CR, Nov-Dec. 1932, E17 : PQ VII, 2, July 1931; E18 : PQ VI, 3, October 1930, E19 : PQ,

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XII, 4, January 1937, E20 : CR, April 1937, E21 : XI, 1, April 1935, E23 : PQ VII, 4, January 1932, E25 : PQ, October 1935.

I seize this opportunity to thank Ms Satyabhama Raghavan of the National Library, Calcutta, Sri Kasinath Hazra of the Journal Section of the Calcutta University Library, Ms Jhuma Bhattacharyya of the Indian Academy of Philosophy who helped me ungrudgingly to trace the essays. [Thanks are due to Ms Bhattacharyya also for her generous assistance in the preparation of the Index]

9

The essays are reprinted here in the form in which they first appeared — we have only corrected some printing errors, inserted here and there some expressions — words or sentences left out in the original. As a result, you will notice an annoying lack of uniformity : in some essays there are footnotes; in some, references are within the body of the essay. Absence of uniformity will be seen especially in the case of Sanskrit words – in some essays diacritical marks are used, while in others they are not, in some Sanskrit words are in roman, in others they are given in italics; words like Advaita, advaitist in some places begin with capital letters, while in some they are given in lower-case lettering; in some places we have “advaitin” and in some “advaitist”, in some places “Brahma”, in some “Brahman”. This multiformity we allowed to remain out of deference to the author; besides, the essays were written in different times, for different journals and we thought it would be impolite of us to ride roughshod over a journal's lettering or transliteration style.

Here is another irregularity. In Essay 22 Das justifies his preference of “Krishnachandra” to “Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya”, but in the very next essay Krishnachandra

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is referred to as Prof. Bhattacharya. The fact is that the essays are not arranged chronologically — in the present case, for example, Essay 22 was written in 1932 while 21 was written after about 30 years (in 1963). So such discrepancies could not be avoided.

10

The invitation to collect Das's papers strewn here and there in not very recent past and to contribute an introduction to a collection of his essays, I consider a great honour, candidly, the greatest, in my otherwise undistinguished life. For this kind act I am indebted to the members of the Indian Academy of Philosophy and the Rasvihary Das Memorial Trust. And on behalf of these institutions I thank Dr. R. N. Bose, Vice-chancellor, Calcutta university for his encouraging interest in this project of commemorating Das's birth centenary, the members of the Syndicate, the Head of the Deptt. of Philosophy, and his esteemed colleagues particularly Dr. Karuna Bhattacharya [a student of Das who was very fond of her], and the printing people of the University Press — Sri Pradip Ghosh and his colleagues, for being one with us in paying homage to the spirit of inquiry, moderation and openmindedness that was Rasvihary Das.

The homage will, however, ring hollow unless it is made to assume a more fruitful form—one, say, that will train and enlighten learners. I hope that those of us who are associated with academic bodies of different universities will see to it that the spirit percolates to every student of philosophy through some selection of these essays made a part of the syllabuses for undergraduate and postgraduate students. It is this that will be a suitable and lasting tribute to Das.

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy brought out a supplement in memory of Rasvihary Das [Vol. XVI No 1, 1973] in which are recollection of him by some eminent persons who knew him intimately [I refer the readers to this invaluable issue]. I think I had better draw upon these memoirs, especially the reminiscences of Chandrodaya Bhattacharyya.

A short, frail-looking figure, with a dhoti with its fall neatly tucked behind, a long loose flowing sliken or cotton collarless shirt reaching down to his knees, a shawl thrown around his shoulders, a black cord visible around the neck, its ends tied to a watch nestling in the upper chest-pocket of the shirt, closely bearded chin and temples with a shock of curlish hair on the head, eyes flashing with intelligence and full of humorous glint

— that was Rasvihary Das, writes Prof. V. M. Bedekar, a professor of English and Sanskrit at a college at Amalner.

Rasvihary Das was born on May 9, 1894 in a poor family living in a backward village (Akhailura) in the Moulavibazar subdivision of Sylhet district, now a part of Bangladesh. He studied up to his Matriculation at Moulavibazar, graduated from the City College, Calcutta, and did his M.A. in Philosophy [and Sanskrit] from the University of Calcutta.

He lost his father early in his life, and being the eldest son of his parents, had to shoulder the responsibility of maintaining his mother, two brothers and a sister. Life

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was so hard at this time that sometimes for days together he had to go without a full meal. Many a man would have broken down under such financial distress, but the young indomitable Rasvihary was made of sturdy stuff. Fighting adversity Rasvihary not only did not give up his studies, he also saw to it that his sister graduated and his two brothers obtained engineering degrees.

As Chandrodaya Bhattacharyya, who was Dr. Das's righthand man in building up the Indian Academy of Philosophy, recalls : Even before he graduated, he somehow had access to the famous polymath Dr. Brajendranath Seal, then Professor of Philosophy at the Calcutta University. Dr. Seal treated the young man with much affection, helping him occasionally with money, and encouraging him in many ways to satisfy his rather extraordinary desire to be acquainted with the works of the great philosophers and litterateurs of the world. In the postgraduate class the young Rasvihary came in close contact with Professor Krishnachandra Bhattacharya. His wonderment (should I say, enchantment) at meeting these two great minds, and how they influenced him and contributed to the shaping of his life has been recounted by Das in the first essay in this volume.

After passing his M.A. in 1920 [here I more or less reproduce the history told by Chandrodaya Bhattacharyya] Das joined, the Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner in the Jalgaon district of Maharashtra first as a senior Research Fellow. He was its Professor of Logic and Metaphysics for about two decades and a half. Here, far from the madding crowd, he pursued his studies with single-minded devotion and acquired some scholarship in the philosophies of the West, ancient, modern and

A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

contemporary, as well as in Nyaya and Vedanta. He also learnt many languages — he could speak read and write Sanskrit, English, German, Hindi and Marathi like his mother tongue; and he had a fair knowledge of Greek, Latin, French, Persian, Arabic, Assamese and Gujrathi.

Drawing our attention to Das's distant attitude to worldly goods and creature comforts, and his passion for learning, Burch says

Prof. Das's secluded life [at Amalner] left him innocent in the world of affairs, but wise in the world of books. An omnivorous reader he is learned in the philosophical and other literature of India and the West.

He left Amalner, when his children grew up, to join the Calcutta University. He continued here till his retirement except for a period of two years, 1951–53, when he was the Head of the Deptt. of Philosophy at the Sagar University. In 1955 he went to Harvard University as a Visiting Professor for a semester. In 1962 he was also for a semester, a Visiting Professor at the Gottingen University.

In 1954 he founded the Indian Academy of Philosophy in Calcutta, with the aim, as he put it, of fostering original thought, research and genuine scholarship in philosophy. Its organ *The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy* was started in 1961–62. Long ago it was mainly at his initiative that the *Bangiya Darsan Parishad* and its organ, the quarterly *Darsan* were founded. For sometime he was the editor of the journal and contributed a number of papers to it. Chandrodaya Bhattacharya recalls : he was often heard to say that his own views are mostly to be found in the Bengali essays collected in the volume *Katipaya Darsanik Prabandha* published by Bangiya Darsan Parishad.

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He wrote a large number of papers in English and Bengali — some of them included in this volume and some in *Katipaya Darsanik Prabandha*. He, however, like Moore [to whom I have likened him] authored only a few books or monographs each of which is worth its weight in gold. These are

1. *The Essentials of Advaitism*
The Punjab Sanskrit Series, Lahore 1931
2. *The Theory of Ignorance in Advaitism — in Ajñāna: The Theory of Ignorance*, Luzac, London, 1933
3. *The Self and the Ideal*,
The Calcutta University Press, 1935
4. *The Philosophy of Whitehead*,
James Clarke and Co., London, 1937
5. *A Handbook to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*
Progressive Publishers, Calcutta, 1948
6. *An Introduction to Shankara*
Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1968
7. *Kanter Darsan*
A. Mukherjee, Calcutta, 1950
8. *Katipaya Darsanik Prabandha*
Bangiya Darsan Parishad, Calcutta, 1978

Das as a practical idealist has not been represented in this volume. The following selection of essays written at what has been called "the youthful speculative stage" will give an idea of his practical idealism (p. XXIII).

1. *Metaphysics and Ethics*, PQ III, 1, April 1926
2. *Objectivity of Values*, PQ III, 3, October 1927
3. *The Ideal as God*, PQ IV, 3, October 1928
4. *The Ideal and the Absolute*, PQ, VI [in two parts], 1930

PURSUIT OF TRUTH THROUGH DOUBT AND BELIEF

What I believe

1 PURSUIT OF TRUTH THROUGH DOUBT AND BELIEF

I am not a philosopher, if by "a philosopher" is meant one who has achieved a well-reasoned systematic view of the universe, in the light of which he can explain every fact of experience, whether theoretical or practical. I am a philosopher only in the modest sense that I take interest in some of the problems discussed by recognised philosophers of the past and the present day, and have hesitatingly come to hold certain views in regard to these problems. I do not claim, and, indeed, would repudiate the suggestion, that these views are original or novel in any sense. My philosophical position, such as it is, is thus defined by my views on certain philosophical questions.

But it is very difficult, if not impossible, to give a satisfactory account of the way which led me to these views. Certain considerations no doubt weighed with me in my coming to a particular view, but it cannot be claimed that the logical strength of these considerations is always sufficient to support the view which is supposed to be based on them. I am inclined to think that our views are not always arrived at through a logical process of reasoning, and that though they must have causes which are sufficient for them, these causes are often hidden in the depth of our personality, and may not appear before our consciousness.

At any rate, our personality is a dominant factor in determining our philosophical and other views, and nobody can bring before his consciousness his own (or anybody else's) personality in its fullness and depth. If therefore I am unable to indicate clearly and truly how I was logically or historically led to the views I have come to hold, I hope my failure is not due to any particular defect of my nature or education.

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However, I can state certain facts in connexion with my philosophical education which may conceivably be connected with my present views. After a brief statement of these facts, I shall proceed to give an account of some of my philosophical views to which I seem to attach some importance. I shall also try to indicate, wherever possible, the relevant considerations which have prevailed with me in determining my views in question.

Even before I began a formal study of philosophy, I had become acquainted with certain philosophical ideas from my miscellaneous studies. But I got my real teachers of philosophy when I came to the M.A. class. I read Hegel's *Logic* (smaller) with Dr. H. Halder, Lotze's *Metaphysics* with Dr. B.N. Seal and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* with Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya. I learnt more from personal discussions with my teachers than learn from the books on which they lectured.

I am particularly indebted to Dr. B. N. Seal and Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya. The wide sweep of Dr. Seal's mind and the breadth of his views impressed me, and it was probably from him that I derived an interest in knowledge of all kinds as well as an interest in free speculative thinking. He was an enthusiast for Indian Philosophy and introduced me to Shankara and Ramanuja. I easily followed him in his sympathy for the latter's teaching.

The acuteness and subtlety of Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya at once humbled and captivated my mind. It was a wonder and delight to see how deeply he probed any philosophical question and brought to light many new aspects, of which we had no idea before. It was he who first made me conscious how enormously difficult it is to return a confident answer to any serious philosophical question. It was very fortunate that my great teachers never sought to thrust any of their philosophical views on

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me, but allowed me to grow in my own way. I believe I could have learnt more from Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya than I did, if my sympathies were not already engaged in other quarters.

The course of philosophical studies, even from the under-graduate stage, at the Calcutta University, during my student days, was dominated by Hegelian ideas, and by way of reaction I was drawn to realistic writers.

After passing the M.A. examination, I joined the Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner, where I remained for 26 years. I had splendid opportunities there of studying Indian Philosophy under orthodox pundits and of discussing philosophical questions frequently with my colleagues. The official philosophy at the Institute was *Advaita Vedānta*, and there too by reaction my mind fell back upon *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*, which represents the robust realistic trend of Indian Philosophy. Thus although I lived in an idealistic atmosphere, it has tended to harden my inner realism. This does not mean that I do not appreciate, or have failed to learn from idealistic writers. On the contrary, generally speaking, I find more depth in idealistic writers than in the realists, though the latter seem to attract me more by their greater clarity.

A. BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE

It will be generally agreed that philosophy is concerned with knowledge, and it seems desirable that I should make clear at the outset what I understand by "knowledge." An answer to this question has seemed necessary because of the lack of unanimity that seems to exist among philosophers as to the meaning of the term "knowledge." Some philosophers hold (i) that knowledge is indefinable, and (ii) that it is always infallible and has therefore to be distinguished from belief which is fallible. I shall consider only these two points here.

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(i) I admit that there is an essential element in knowledge which is indefinable. I call it consciousness. If anyone does not directly understand what is meant by consciousness I cannot make him understand it by any number of words. Consciousness again involves the idea of something else which may be called its objects. Whenever I am conscious, I am conscious of something. The something in question may be vague or obscure to any extent, but it can never be altogether absent. Some philosophers have conceived the possibility, and have even asserted the actuality, of objectless consciousness. I seem to find no meaning in such consciousness. For me consciousness is always of an object.

Now the object of consciousness may be of any kind whatever. Psychologists have analysed consciousness into different modes, such as cognition, volition and feeling. The object in each case seems to be characteristically different, especially as regards its relation to the corresponding mode of consciousness. The object of feeling (e.g., a pleasure) cannot exist apart from our feeling of it. The object of willing is seen in the future and comes into existence through the operation of willing. The object of cognition, on the other hand, does not owe its existence to it. I mean by knowledge a form of cognition. (I am not sure whether the psychologist's analysis of consciousness into three distinct modes is quite correct. I have made use of his analysis merely to explicate my view of knowledge).

Knowledge for me is a mode of consciousness in which the object is taken to exist apart from, and independently of, the act of consciousness of which it is the object. Further, the object of knowledge must be an existent object and in it we can distinguish two aspects which may be described as the thing and its character, otherwise called existence and essence or *that* and *what* by some philosophers. By the term "thing" here I mean

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the object as merely existing, viewed abstractly as distinguished from its character, which in fact is never separated from it. We may sometimes fix our mind on a character, ignoring the thing of which it is a character. In that case we have a cognition of which the object is the character apprehended. I seem to think that there is sometimes such apprehension of a mere character. But I am not sure whether there is any apprehension of a mere thing apart from any character. If there be any, it will not be a case of knowledge, as the apprehension of a mere character also is not knowledge, since the full object of knowledge is constituted by a thing or a substantive characterised by an adjective. Apprehension of a mere character (or a mere thing) is also cognition, not feeling or willing, but is not knowledge in my, or, as I take it, in the ordinary, sense of the term "knowledge". Knowledge in my view thus appears to be definable as a form of cognition (which is a mode of consciousness) of which the object is an existent thing with a character. Sometimes a character is falsely ascribed to a thing which does not possess it. Knowledge in that case, in which such false characterisation takes place, is called false. True knowledge means knowledge in which a character is asserted of a thing to which it really belongs. Since the case of false knowledge, until its falsity has been found out, cannot be distinguished from a case of true knowledge, I hold, following a very common usage, that knowledge may be either true or false. But I am ready also to respect the other view, according to which knowledge must always be true, because what we seek and what is really worthy of its name is knowledge which is true. I now pass on to consider the second point.

(ii) It is not my purpose here to arrive at a correct and independent analysis of belief. I am willing to accept the analysis which is sometimes given and which discovers

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in it two distinguishable elements, viz., (1) the entertaining (understanding) of a proposition, and (2) the assenting to or adopting that proposition. It appears that the process of assenting further consists of two factors, one volitional and the other emotional. When we assent to a proposition, we seem to decide in favour of it, we make up our mind that something is so and so. Our attitude is the same as when we decide to do something. This is the volitional factor. Further when we assent to a proposition we have the feeling of confidence, of sureness about it. Now the question is whether knowledge as we have it, or are likely to attain in this world, goes any further than what is called belief. I seem to think that it does not, and although we are sometimes able to make a distinction between knowledge and belief (as when we say "I don't know who made this noise, but I believe it was so and so"), it is not possible to distinguish subjectively knowledge from confident belief.

I am strengthened in my opinion by the fact that in every case of knowledge the object appears (is known) as characterised by some adjective, but whether the adjective (i.e., the assigned character) is really present in the object known cannot be made out in the very act of knowledge, which therefore remains always theoretically questionable. That is, it is fallible like belief.

Moreover, the volitional and emotional elements which are said to characterise belief, as distinct from knowledge, appear by no means to be absent in the case of knowledge also. Mere emergence of a content in consciousness of apprehension of a character is not knowledge, unless the content is posited in reality or the character is asserted of something existent. This position or assertion appears volitional in character. Also when we are said to know a thing we cannot help feeling a degree of certainty about it.

Nevertheless we are bound to recognise some

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difference in meaning between knowledge and belief. By knowledge proper we mean knowledge which is true. If anything is to pass as knowledge it must claim to be objectively valid. A belief, on the other, hand refers especially to our feeling of certainty and volitional acceptance. Hence a belief may be strong or weak whereas it gives no good sense to speak of knowledge as strong or weak. To know is merely to recognise some fact as evident. Thus it appears that knowledge should be entirely exempt from error. But such knowledge is more ideal than actual. What passes for knowledge with us is in most cases no better than belief. And it may be one of the functions of philosophy to make us aware of the uncertain character of much of our accepted knowledge. What then is Philosophy?

B. PHILOSOPHY AS CRITICAL REFLECTION

In formulating my view of philosophy, I am guided by certain assumptions to which I hope no serious objections will be taken. I assume that philosophy is an affair of knowledge, such as science and history. Secondly, I assume that it is teachable by rational means. Certain conclusions seem to follow from these assumptions. One of them is that philosophy is not mysticism and is not a matter of intuition, because mysticism or intuition, as I take it, cannot be taught, far less by any rational means. The question about the nature of philosophic knowledge is a difficult one. We seem to have only one meaning for knowledge and if science gives all the attainable knowledge about reality, there seems nothing left for philosophy to do.

It is said that science studies only parts or aspects of reality, while philosophy studies reality as a whole. But can there be a study of a whole which is exclusive of the study of the parts? If not, then philosophy should include

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all the sciences. It was, therefore, thought at one time that philosophy was the science of sciences or that it unified the results of different sciences. This is obviously an impossible idea, because no philosopher can be found who combines in himself all the available scientific knowledge ; and moreover it makes philosophy entirely dependent on the sciences and leaves nothing distinctive to it.

Those who think that knowledge must be of one kind only and are also convinced that science undoubtedly gives us knowledge are sometimes led to suppose that we get no knowledge in philosophy. Some think, on the other hand, that we get knowledge in philosophy and also that philosophy is different from science. I have, therefore, to distinguish between scientific and philosophic knowledge.

A scientific judgment may be expressed in the form " S is P ", where S stands for a substantive and P for its character. This may be said to express a fact constituted by the thing and its character (together with their relation). Supposing I know this fact and know it truly, and assert "I know that S is P ," what seems to be asserted is the original fact as also its knowledge. But when we assert true knowledge of an object, we seem to assert not *knowledge* either as a character or as a substantive, but merely the *object* as known. By true knowledge we mean knowledge which is unaffected by any subjective factor, and, in asserting true knowledge, the subject may be left out of account, though for the purposes of common speech, it has always to be mentioned. Thus I am led to suppose that when (1) I know a fact and when (2) I know the fact as known, I am knowing the same thing. Only in the second case my knowledge is self-conscious, and in the first case it is not so. The distinction between scientific and philosophic knowledge appears analogous to the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness.

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In my view, knowledge is not ordinarily self-conscious, but it becomes self-conscious only when it is challenged by any doubt or question. Scientific knowledge may be said to be already reflective in character, as it is based on the reflection on our perceptual experience, which is a conscious process. But scientific knowledge is always expressed in objective judgments, in which there is no clear reference to the knowing subject or to knowledge itself. Such reference comes in when scientific knowledge is made further reflective and raised to the philosophical level. This appears to be the only difference in respect to those cases of scientific knowledge which are cases of ideal knowledge and are absolutely true. Being absolutely true and true of reality, it cannot be improved upon by philosophy, except in the sense of being made reflective.

But, as a matter of fact, our scientific knowledge is highly tinged with imaginative construction and involves many assumptions. The function of philosophy, in regard to this kind of knowledge, is to subject it to critical reflection with a view to discovering what the underlying assumptions are, how far they are justified and whether they are mutually consistent. In fact philosophy means for me little more than critical reflection. We may describe it as critical reflection on life, understanding "life" in the most comprehensive sense, as inclusive of experiences of all kinds, not excluding our higher rational activities, such as science, art, morality, etc.

In our ordinary moods, we are not reflective; our minds are turned to objects, mostly outward objects. But when we meet with some failure in the pursuit of objective ends, our mind is then turned back upon itself, and we begin to consider things with a questioning mind. Most often such consideration seems to start with a sense of disillusionment, which means a sense of having been under an illusion. Thus the roots of philosophy or critical reflection seem to



lie in failure and illusion and consequent doubt regarding things and values.

I have described philosophy as critical reflection, but what exactly this critical reflection is and how it has to be carried on, we can learn only from a study of philosophy. Philosophy itself must teach us what philosophy is. When we profess to teach philosophy, we merely try to teach critical reflection, either by explaining the classical examples of it, as we find them in the works of recognised philosophers, or by giving a demonstration of it ourselves in the class-room. The particular opinions held by a philosopher, or the conclusions arrived at by him, are not of primary importance. The really important matter to consider is how they arrived, or what exactly they did in arriving, at those conclusions. To learn what opinions certain remarkable individuals called philosophers held in the past is to learn mere history, but to learn how they arrived at their conclusions is to take an object-lesson in philosophising, and to consider critically their ways of philosophising or their philosophical opinions is to practise philosophy. Opinions differ from philosopher to philosopher, but critical reflection, I believe, is more or less the same in all philosophers and it appears to be teachable in the way suggested above.

C. COMMONSENSE REALISM

When we philosophise on any kind of experience, we subject certain beliefs involved in that experience to critical reflection, which may have the effect of dissipating or modifying or even, sometimes, of confirming those beliefs. Our commonsense beliefs appear to be the natural starting point of all philosophising, and we are frankly realistic to start with. My critical reflection, probably because it is neither very deep nor sufficiently critical, has left my commonsense beliefs more or less unaffected. But

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although it has not changed my commonsense, it has at least made it self-conscious. I shall try to make it here plain why and in what sense I have remained a realist. I think realism needs no justification to establish itself, since we all naturally begin as realists, and realism is already in possession of the field. What needs justification is the rejection of realism, but I have not yet met with any complete or satisfactory refutation of realism. I shall not, therefore, try to give here any reasons in positive support of realism, but I may briefly indicate some of the reasons which have weighed with me in my not accepting certain types of idealism which find favour with many philosophers.

By idealism I here mean generally the type of theory which makes the objects of knowledge dependent for their existence on our knowledge of them. The object which is dependent on my knowledge is clearly an imaginary or illusory object. And *Advaitism* unequivocally says that the object is an illusion. I can well understand how a particular object may be an illusion, because I can think of a real object (or real objective situation) in place of the illusory one. But that the object as such should be illusory I cannot conceive at all, because such illusion would require the judgment that there is no object at all, and this judgment seems to have no significant content of meaning. Moreover by illusion we understand a presentation which is condemned in the light of some other knowledge which refers to the same object. And I do not know how our knowledge of object as such can ever be condemned. It cannot be condemned by unobjective knowledge (if such there be), because it is irrelevant, not having the same reference, nor can it be condemned by objective knowledge, because being itself objective, it cannot invalidate objective knowledge as such.

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I cannot also accept the position of those who do not openly declare the object to be an illusion, but still hold that the object is a construction of the mind. They seem to conceive knowledge as a form of doing. I, on the other hand, understand knowledge as purely revelatory in character. Knowledge seems utterly incapable of doing or making anything. True, we sometimes bring together certain ideas and conceive a new thing. But all this is in imagination, and when the product of imagination is taken to be an object of knowledge, we have a clear case of illusion. For a Kantian the object of knowledge is not illusory, but an appearance, while the real thing-in-itself is unknown and unknowable. It is no doubt sense to call an object appearance, in the light of the real object, which is known, and is in some way different from it. But to call the entire realm of objects appearance, while nothing else is known with which it can be contrasted, seems to bring no clear sense to me.

Those who do not leave the real object outside, but bring it wholly within knowledge, and make it entirely correlative to the subject, may seem to occupy an easier position. But I do not think I understand their position any better. We can understand two entities as correlative to each other in certain of their aspects. But they must each have a nature of their own, other than their correlative aspects. When we do not know them except as correlative, we cannot be said to know them in their ultimate reality. To call them correlative is to describe them as relative. But their relativity or relation, far from exhausting their entire being, cannot even be intelligently asserted, unless we have some sense or meaning for their independent character.

To say that the ultimate reality is neither subject nor object, but their unity does not seem to improve the

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position much. First, because by the conception of unity, which appears to be a relation, we get no appreciable new light about the nature of the things united; secondly, because we can form no idea how both subject and object (which are apparently opposed to each other) are to be combined into a single unity. To cite the instance of self-consciousness is not very helpful either, because the notion of self-consciousness, in the sense intended here, is itself full of difficulties.

Those who reduce the object frankly to a function of the subject do not have to face these difficulties, but they seem to falsify the very notion of the object. A subjective function which is an act or way of *knowing* has never the meaning of an object which is *known*. Yet the former is equated with the latter and the equation seems illegitimate and incomprehensible.

These are some of the considerations which have led my mind away from idealism to realism.

My realism consists principally in my view that the object of knowledge exists independently of the act of knowing, but knowledge is not possible without some object being given to it. I can conceive the object apart from any subject, but I cannot conceive the subject except in relation to some object. I do not consider this ability or inability to be a merit or a defect of my mind, but an obvious consequence of my notion of knowledge, which I take to be quite legitimate and proper.

I like to describe my view as commonsense realism, in distinction from certain other forms of realism. The distinction is based on my view of perception and of physical objects. I regard perception as a direct and primary form of knowing, and so, differ from those realists, who do not recognise perception strictly as a form of knowing, or, even recognising it as knowledge, do not take

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it to be either a direct or a primary form of knowing. In the sphere of knowledge, I do not find anything more primary than perception and in perception I seem to cognise directly an object with a certain character. Supposing we call the peculiar character of a table "tabularity," then I admit that in order to learn what tabularity is, I may have to compare and contrast tables with other objects. But once I have learnt what this character is, I can directly cognise it in any object which is a table. My previous knowledge of tabularity may be a condition of my perception of a thing as a table, but the condition being fulfilled, the perception seems to take place quite simply and directly without involving any elaborate process of comparison.

Many philosophers say that the so-called secondary qualities like colour, smell, etc., are due to the affections of our sense-organs and cannot, therefore, be regarded as resident in objects. I admit that I have to open my eyes before I can see a colour and it may be true that certain changes occur at the time in the optic nerves, which are part of my physical eye. But I do not see the eye or its affection, when I see a colour, and I cannot think that the particular colour I see is a gift of my eye. The function of my organism is a condition of my knowledge, and, being a condition of knowledge, it should not make knowledge impossible. If the character colour could not be asserted of an object, because of the accompanying function of the organism, then, since the organism is bound to function in any act of knowing, no character whatever could be asserted of anything. This would make knowledge impossible. It will not do to say that ultimately we know the functions of the organism only, because, on the present hypothesis, we should not know that there is any organism at all. This is surely an intolerable position. I find it easier to think that the colour really belongs where I actually find it.

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Some modern thinkers have discovered a new kind of entities called sense-data, which are said to be directly known, and out of which the physical objects are supposed to be constructed. I must confess that I find it difficult to believe in the existence of such back-less superficies, as the sense-data are sometimes described to be. I do not also think that there can be a common class of objects, which are indifferently present in veridical perception as well as in illusion. Lastly, I fail to discover any such entities in my actual knowledge. I never apprehend a coloured patch, whose entire being is exhausted in the mere sensible quality. I see coloured thing which, as I take it, exists at a definite place and possesses many intelligible qualities besides the sensible ones. What seems to be given first, in actual knowledge, is the physical object, the obvious of ordinary perception, and it is only by an effort of abstraction that we can formulate the concept of a sense-datum.

The commonsense character of my realism will probably appear also in the fact that I regard myself as one with my body. It appears common sense to say that I am thin and short. I accept this statement literally and this is possible when I understand myself as identified with my body. Some kind of material organisation seems indispensable to life and consciousness, and I do not think it possible to have any experience except in and through the body.

I do not think that the phenomena of consciousness can be adequately described or explained in purely materialistic terms. A feeling or thought is utterly distinct in kind from heat or colour or the movement of material particle. Consciousness in my opinion is absolutely *sui generis* and is not like anything else in the universe; and although I think it inseparable from the body, I do not pretend to understand how it is connected with the body. By reflection I am no doubt made aware of consciousness,

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but I find it to be entirely unobjective. In fact it is not anything *found* but is another name for *finding* itself. It cannot be equated with any objective modification, nor can it be conceived as resulting from an objective process. My consciousness, then, is not anything *in* my body, nor is it the result of any bodily process, although some kind of bodily process seems to accompany it always. The body, or my self as embodied, is conscious from the beginning, and the changes in my body are reflected in the changes in the content of my consciousness. The relation between consciousness and its content seems as difficult to understand as the relation between consciousness and the body. But somehow they seem to be most intimately connected. The relation between consciousness and body seems analogous to the relation between beauty and a statue which is beautiful. Beauty is not a material attribute of the statue, although it is inseparable from it. Just as the beauty vanishes with the destruction of the statue, so, I think, my personal consciousness will cease with the death of my body.

D. SCEPTICISM

I understand knowledge as revelatory of the object. In all our efforts to know, our sole object is to see the object revealed as it really is. This, however, is an ideal which it is always difficult to realise in practice, because we have to know the object through the instrumentality of our senses and the mind, and although they are meant to help the revelation, they often distort it. We may suppose that the senses commit no mistakes (though they certainly do, when they are not healthy, and it is difficult to be sure when they are perfectly healthy), but in interpreting the material presented by the senses, we often go wrong, as is clearly proved by numerous instances of error and illusion. What we actually see or hear is not wholly given

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by the senses, but is made up to some extent by imaginative interpretation. And it is not possible to distinguish in an object, at the time of knowledge, what is given by the senses from what is added by our subjective interpretation. I cannot say that imaginative interpretation is necessarily wrong; it is, I suppose, meant to aid our perception of objects. But one has to recognise the fact that what is added by imagination has never any guarantee of its objective validity. Though imagination working in the interest of knowledge is never quite free, yet it seems evident that it cannot operate without some scope for freedom, and when this fact is recognised we cannot but recognise also that there is no necessity that what is given by imagination should entirely coincide with what is in fact presented to the senses. At any rate the numerous instances of error and illusion, with which we are familiar, make it abundantly clear that what is taken to be knowledge in any particular instance may not be real knowledge, that the character asserted in knowledge may not be actually present in the object of knowledge. That is, although our assertions are meant to reach the fact, there is no necessary connexion between assertion and facthood, and the factuality of an objective assertion is accepted on faith only. This means that we can never free ourselves from the doubt that our so-called knowledge may prove wrong.

Thus an element of scepticism seems inseparable from all our endeavours of knowledge. Critical reflection with which I have identified philosophy, proceeds from a feeling of doubt and is maintained in being by the same sceptical spirit. Philosophy thus, which is free enquiry and is not based on any dogmatic faith, is and will always remain to some extent sceptical.

They say sometimes that scepticism refutes itself. This does not seem to be the case. Scepticism, as I



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understand it, is not a positive theory which may be affirmed or denied, but an attitude of mind which is essential to all genuine critical enquiry. If I am asked whether even when I doubt, I am not *certain* that I doubt, I have only to point out that although I *know* that I doubt, my secondary or reflective knowledge does not alter or falsify the primary fact which is doubting. Far from supposing that scepticism refutes itself and stands self-condemned, I am inclined to think that it is irrefutable and should be recognised as a valuable element in our life and thought. I think it irrefutable in the sense that it is quite unavoidable for a mind which is at once honest and intelligent. If a mind is sufficiently intelligent, it will recognise that all our so-called knowledge is hedged in by various beliefs and assumptions, and there is besides a degree of uncertainty and obscurity attaching to almost every judgment which we make or imply in the name of knowledge. If it is honest, it is bound to recognise how uncertain must be our hold on truth claimed under such conditions. About every objective judgment, we may raise the question, is it true? To admit the significance of this question is to admit some room for doubt. When we realise that there is an element of belief (or volitional acceptance) in our ordinary knowledge, we realise at the same time that it is open to doubt. Paradoxically, if a little loosely, I may say, I believe and, therefore, I doubt.

The value of scepticism for knowledge will be easily recognised. It opens the path of free enquiry and loosens the roots of prejudice which is a hindrance to knowledge. There is also a sense in which scepticism may be pursued as an intellectual ideal. We may make it aim of our intellectual efforts to become conscious of the elements of uncertainty, obscurity and vagueness, which are to be discovered by careful analysis in various kinds and



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instances of our accepted knowledge. The moral value of scepticism cannot also be overlooked. As it works against bias and prejudice, it tends to make men impartial and tolerant of each other's faith.

E. PRACTICAL IDEALISM

I am often sceptical; but my scepticism does not run so far as to paralyse my thought and will. It does not bar out all beliefs, but only recommends that they should be held rather lightly, so that, on the discovery of any conclusive contrary evidence, that may be given up without much difficulty. So I find no difficulty in believing in certain ultimate values. I have already expressed my belief in scepticism itself. But scepticism is not an ultimate value, i.e., it has no value in itself. It is valuable only for its moral and other consequences. I seem to recognise certain values which are intrinsic and ultimate.

I do not know whether the concept of value is definable. I may indicate what sort of thing I mean by the term. Value means for me something which is desirable (considered worthy) on its own account, is necessarily appreciated by our reason and sought to be realised by us. We understand value in relation to our feeling and will. That is, if anything is conceived as a value we cannot but desire its realisation and regard it with a feeling of appreciation. If anything is to be an object of our rational willing, it must appear to us as a value, although in many cases we may find, on reflection, either that its is not desirable at all or desirable for the sake of something else, in which case it would be considered a dependent value and not an ultimate one.

Truth appears to be an ultimate value. By the term "truth" we describe the character of knowledge which is



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perfectly accordant with its object and is absolutely clear and certain leaving no room for doubt and uncertainty. Knowledge in this ideal form is also called truth, and is the ultimate objective and ideal for all our cognitive efforts.

I conceive freedom to be another such ideal or value. Just as truth is the ideal of knowledge, freedom is the ideal of will. Just as perfect knowledge is true knowledge, perfect willing is free willing. Freedom seems unintelligible except in terms of willing. (Political freedom ultimately means capacity for free willing on the part of the citizens of a state).

What freedom positively means I confess I do not exactly know. Negatively it means the state of not being bound. Willing is a function of reason and it seems at present to be controlled by the solicitations of sense. Freedom which we seek as a rational ideal is emancipation from the insistent demands of sensibility. Our will is free when it is no longer dominated by the thought of any sensible object.

I like to describe the ideal of feeling as love. I do not here mean by love any kind of physical attachment or psychical impulse. I mean by it the feeling of unalloyed joy together with a sense of unity. Pure joy of course appears desirable for its own sake and is to be realised in feeling. I associate it with sense of unity also, which seems desirable and is realisable only in feeling. The object of cognition is quite distinct from cognition; the object of willing is ahead of willing and is not one with it. Only in feeling can we realise our unity with the object.

There may be other ideals, but I seem clearly to recognise these three, corresponding to the three functions of reason : cognition, willing and feeling. We may conceive

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these three as forms of the Good, which represents the common form of the ideal. (In place of the traditional forms of ultimate value, truth, goodness and beauty, I would have truth, freedom and love. In the conception of love I have sought to combine both charity and beauty. Delight and harmony, associated with beauty, appear in my conception as joy and unity).

I cannot regard these ideals as subjective fancies; they present themselves to my consciousness as objective, as veritable determinants of my rational being, and I feel bound to recognise them as supremely real in some sense. I am thus an idealist in the sense that I believe in ideals as having supreme importance in the scheme of things.

The distinction between a realist and an idealist turns, in my opinion, ultimately upon the relative importance attached by them respectively to the objective facts and subjective functions or ideas. They recognise in a sense both these factors, objective and subjective, but whereas the realist considers the objective as prior, and in a sense, superior to the subjective, idealist holds the opposite view. In matters of knowledge I have to recognise the dominant role of the object, and so, I am a theoretical realist. But as I would have my will or practical reason completely determined by the subjective (which includes for me both ideas and ideals), I may be called a practical idealist.

Further, I think that it is in our concern for inactual ideals, as against the actualities of our physical and psychical being, that we rise above animality and realise our spiritual being. There appears to be a general upward trend in nature from matter towards life, mind and consciousness. In our concern for the ideal of truth, freedom and love, we aspire to rise above mere

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consciousness which we share in common with animals, and in so rising, become truly spiritual. I take spirituality to be the supreme concern of the universe. My physical organism and psychical being will no doubt perish in course of time, but in my concern for spiritual ideals, I seem to escape from the particularity and finitude of my physical and psychical being and become identified with what is universal, infinite and eternal. This seems to be the only kind of immortality that can be achieved by mortal men.

2

MY GOD AND MY RELIGION

The other day an intelligent girl student of mine, on finding a copy of *Gitanjali* on my table, asked me seriously whether I could really enjoy such poetry. I replied at once, 'Why not?'. But she argued, 'Since most of it is addressed to God, and you do not believe in God, so you cannot possibly take it all very seriously'. The idea seems to be widespread among my students that I am a confirmed atheist – a position which I have never affirmed or denied. Then came a letter from a student of Dr. D. M. Datta (whose unfailing friendship, since our University days, has been a source of inner strength and mental comfort to me), from which I was glad to learn that they were thinking of presenting Dr. Datta with a *Festschrift*. Naturally I began to think of my old friend and my thoughts turned to the happy days we spent together in our early philosophical career, and I particularly remembered one remark which he once made about me, somewhat in a prophetic vein. The remark was to the effect that I would spend the last years of my life at Brindaban. He was probably prompted to make this remark, as a possible corrective to my open scepticism, to my apparent lack of every religious faith. It may be that in making this remark, he was aided by his knowledge of my mother's religious faith which was Vaishnavism and I should not be surprised if it coincided with the traditional faith of Dr. Datta's family.

I am now nearing the end of the span of life sanctioned in the Bible, and I have not yet gone to Brindaban. Physically, of course, I am not there, but who knows whether mentally or spiritually, I am not somewhere near about the holy land.

So I have thought it worthwhile to try to define my position in regard to God and religion. This would no doubt

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be valuable in itself for me, as it would help me to clarify my own ideas on these important subjects, and it should also serve a useful purpose in that it may allay the anxiety of my friends, who feel concerned about the welfare of my soul, and at the same time, it may satisfy the curiosity of those who are merely curious about my views on such weighty matters. And incidentally, should my essay happen to meet the eyes of my friend Dr. Datta, he may see for himself whether, and how far, I have moved towards or away from Brindaban, – the sacred land designed for the habitation of God's chosen companions.

To begin with God, it is not at all surprising to me that some of those who have come into any near contact with me should think that I am no believer in God. For have I not said sometimes, when I heard people praying to God for help, that it is no use doing so, because God has gone to sleep? I may not have asked them, after Nietzsche, "Have you never heard that God is dead?", but for men, crying for divine help there is hardly any difference between a sleeping god and a dead one. In sober language, I have said that our prayers to God for any change in the course of the physical world are quite fruitless, otherwise no mother would lose her child and nobody would be shipwrecked on high seas. I have heard people give sincere thanks to God for the dangers they escaped while others perished, but I have never felt any enthusiasm for such selective divine mercy. When people have wondered why there should be such iniquities, hideous crimes and senseless suffering in God's world, I have suggested, almost in a bantering tone, 'The poor man (Yes, man, because we think of God after our own image), having gone into the business of creating the world is perhaps finding the job of maintaining it in order too much for his slender resources. I have never concealed my great mental irritation whenever I have heard people in extreme misery

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— old and infirm, homeless and penniless — declare in simple faith that they were in such plight through God's will. If I asked how they could have any regard for a God who willed and wrought such miseries for them, and if they replied, as they often did, by saying that it was after all not God but their own sins committed in past lives that were responsible for their present lot, I generally had the wickedness to suggest that God was the worst sinner in that he created such defective vessels as ourselves, so prone to sinning, and was thus the ultimate cause of our sins and sufferings.

Whenever anybody has asked me in a simple way whether I believe in God's existence, I have never given a straightforward answer. I always ask my questioner to tell me first what he exactly means by God before I can tell him whether or not I believe in his existence. Rarely has anybody succeeded in giving me a clear and intelligible idea of God which does not lead to some absurdity or other. Since the idea of God, as popularly held, did not appear to be quite clear and intelligible, I have never felt it necessary either to affirm or deny God's existence. Perhaps I could truthfully say that I did not know whether God, as popularly conceived, really existed; at least I did not know any definite and sufficient proof for his existence. But I do not think I have ever asserted that I know that God does not exist, whatever the term may mean.

About religion, too, I have allowed myself all sorts of negative criticism. I have said that religion, as we find it in history, has always worked as a divisive force, setting men against men, and bringing untold miseries on them. It is because of the religious feuds between Hindus and Moslems that many of us are homeless now. Religion has no doubt brought many people together, but it has set too

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many more far apart. I have freely admitted the services which religion at one time rendered to mankind, when philosophy and science, morality and art, music and painting, were all taught and practised in close association with religion. In fact religion gave inspiration to them all. But in course of the evolution of human culture, nearly all higher activities of the mind, science and philosophy, art and morality, have separated themselves from religion and are growing independently. Thus religion has now lost much of its cultural content, and I have sometimes felt that it would be a merciful riddance for mankind, if religion, the root cause of so much hatred and strife, was allowed to disappear from the world.

One can easily make out for oneself how religion necessarily leads to discord and strife. Religion, as it is commonly understood, comes to our view only in some specialised form. We do not find a religious man merely as such, but only as Hindu or Moslem or Christian or something else. On account of religion, people are organised into certain groups, each committed to certain dogmas or articles of faith. Some of these at least are mutually exclusive or contradictory, so that all of them cannot be equally true, but some true and others, at least partially, false. Now a person, belonging to a particular faith, cannot but think his articles of faith to be the truest and best (otherwise, why should he accept them?) and suppose all persons professing other faiths to be, at least, partially in error and on the wrong path. He takes pride in his own religion and has scant regard for other religions, inasmuch as he has been conditioned to look upon them as deviations from the correct path. This attitude, which finds expression in the use of derogatory terms like *mlechchhas*, *kafirs*, heathens, etc. in regard to persons of other faiths, inevitably leads to mutual hatred.

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There are certain proselytising religions which enjoin, on their followers, the duty of spreading their faiths among non-believers and of bringing them round to their own faiths. This task of conversion is never very easy; often it involves some pressure, sometimes even the threat of physical violence or death. But a zealot would not mind such atrocities, because he would think he was thereby saving the soul of his victim.

Most religions require their followers to accept certain propositions as revealed truths, e.g. propositions about God, soul and life after death. We know how difficult it is to establish the truth of even empirical propositions for which there is some basis in experience. It is, therefore, difficult to conceive how a person, with a modicum of critical intelligence, can accept without question propositions about such doubtful and supersensible matters as absolute truths.

Such being my reading of religion, as I find it prevalent in the world, based on dogmatic beliefs, leading to mutual hatred and intolerance and inhibiting critical enquiry—I have found it difficult to be favourably inclined towards it. In fact, I have long ceased to identify myself with any particular religious group, because I have not yet found any organised group whose beliefs I could completely share. It is therefore not surprising that I have sometimes said, and have felt no shame to admit, that I have no religion.

But have I really no religion at all? While all, or nearly all, of my fellow human beings, some of whom are, in their intelligence and wisdom, far, far above me, have found it necessary and possible to profess some religion or other, am I so singular, peculiar or perverse, as to have no religion at all? Have not the wise men of our country confidently



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declared—'Eating and mating, sleep and fear are common to men and beasts; dharma (which may be translated as religion) alone is the distinguishing attribute of men and without it men are no better than beasts'?

So I reflected ; and I have found that I, too, have a religion—a religion of my own which may or may not be shared by others. Also I would gladly grant that religion in my sense is an essential attribute of men, and without it we do not realise our human dignity or worth. When I said I had no religion, I merely meant that I could not be identified with any recognised religious group and not that I had no religion at all or religion in any sense.

Now, what do I mean by religion? Religion, to me, primarily means an apprehension of some spiritual ideal, which touches my feeling and will and which I endeavour constantly to realise in life, in my thought and conduct, as well as in the world outside, so far as it is possible and necessary.

There are two or three things to be noted in this connexion. First, there must be an ideal, some high end, which one may set before oneself and try to realise in life, considering it most worthy of man to do so. I do not think animals have any ideals. They fulfil no doubt certain ends, but these are all natural ends, which are fulfilled by nature or natural forces, working through or upon the animals. No animals have ever set them up as ideals to be consciously pursued by them.

Secondly, the ideal which forms part of our religious consciousness must be a spiritual ideal. By spiritual I mean, in the present context, what is concerned with our non-bodily self. Primarily we become acquainted with spirit in our subjective self-consciousness. We find ourselves somehow as embodied, as identified with a body which



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may be short or tall, dark or fair. But inwardly we find ourselves as a thinking, feeling and willing being, as having a sense of true and false, good and bad, beautiful and ugly. This sense, which can never be equated completely with any bodily sensation, discloses some aspects of our spiritual nature. A spiritual ideal would thus be, for a rational being, an ideal of knowledge and wisdom, as well as of moral and aesthetic excellence. If it be the ideal of a man to attain to a height of six or seven feet or to a weight of ten or twelve stones, he cannot be said to have a spiritual ideal. On the other hand, if he aims at being a very kind and selfless person or at attaining an unerring vision of truth, he may well be regarded as having a spiritual ideal.

The third point, which is perhaps implied in the very notion of an ideal, is that one must have respect for the ideal. In fact my apprehension of the ideal and endeavour to realise it in life would amount to religion only when I have the highest regard for it.

Perhaps, it was not necessary to describe the religious ideal as spiritual. If a person has great respect for an ideal, then, whatever it be, his apprehension and pursuit of it in life would amount to his practical religion. Many people run after money, not necessarily for meeting their economic needs, but simply as something good in itself. They may be said to have made money-making their religion. In my view, a man's religion is wholly determined by the kind of ideal he follows in life. And so I should be ready to admit that even money-making or the pursuit of some other unspiritual ideal could be a religion with some people; but that would be such a low kind of religion that it would be hardly proper to call it religion. It is a sad fact that many of us, in spite of our visits to churches, temples and mosques, do not rise, in actual life, far above such

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low kind of religion. We waste the substance of our life in the pursuit of some unspiritual ideal. So I think we cannot have religion in the proper sense of the word unless our life is inspired by some spiritual ideal, unless we deeply conceive a truly spiritual ideal and earnestly endeavour to realise it in our life.

In my conception of religion, all the three elements of our consciousness, thinking, feeling and willing, are involved. We have to conceive the ideal in thought or, at least, have some apprehension of it and feel great respect or reverence for it and then endeavour earnestly to realise it, in life. It is not likely that one has a clear view of the ideal right from the beginning. Probably one starts with a vague apprehension of something very valuable, eminently real or supremely good. There is always the need to make the apprehension deeper and clearer, as also to strengthen and deepen our respect for it. We have to make the ideal more and more dominant and all-pervasive in all our thoughts and activities.

I certainly believe in some spiritual values, such as knowledge or truth, love or kindness, innocent joy or aesthetic enjoyment, as good in themselves, worthy of being pursued and possessed by a rational being. In conceiving and pursuing this ideal, I realise the dignity of my human being. This is my religion.

Most people, I suppose, take to religion with a view to ensuring their welfare in the next life. I do not think I can hope to derive any *post-mortem* benefit from my religion. Whatever religion I have and am able to practise, has been to me its own reward. I do not wish to derive any earthly or unearthly benefit from it except the satisfaction that I have honestly tried to follow my ideal. But, being weak and human in a bad sense, I do not often get the satisfaction and often fail to live up to my ideal.

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Fortunately I have no worry about the next world, about which I am absolutely in the dark. All my concern is with my present life and it will be enough if I can honestly try to live it worthily. Very possibly when one dies, one dies completely and does not merely remain half dead for a time to rise again into some other form of existence. At least I hope, I shall be content, at death, to die out completely.

By God I understand nothing but the highest ideal conceivable, the substance of all spiritual values. My God is what has revealed itself to me, through the imperfect media of my thought and feeling, as my ideal. This God I cannot deny and I have no eye for other Gods.

Is my God a real God or a mere idea? Of course, I have to conceive it in idea. But what I conceive is not again an *idea*, but the *ideal* which I seek to realise in my thought and action. An idea in my mind (or in anybody else's mind), which is already real as idea can never have the characteristic of an *ideal* which demands *realisation* only through our efforts. Nevertheless, the ideal is real in an important sense ; it is real as law of nature or a universal law is real, over and above the particular instances in which we may find it actualised.

How do we judge of the reality of a thing? Its appearance is not always a guarantee of its reality; the appearance may be deceptive. Normally we become sure of its reality through its action or effectiveness (*arthakriyā kâritva*). When we perceive a thing we take it to be real because it has been effective in causing a sensation in us, which is implied in perception. In so far as I find my ideal to be effective in me, in determining my judgment and conduct, in moving me in certain lines of action, I cannot deny its reality. It is of course not real in the sense in which a chair or a table before me is taken to be real.

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A chair or a table is nothing but a passing phenomenon, but the ideal, by its very nature, is conceived as an abiding noumenon, whose manifestation, however, in characteristic phenomena, is not denied.

I have already indicated that I conceive my ideal or God roughly as love, as knowledge and as innocent joy. Wherever I find these, I like to feel the presence of my God there. To find God, I need not retire into mountain caves or climb up to hill-tops, or travel far to well-known holy places or even visit temples, churches or mosques nearby. In every act of genuine selfless love, my God seems to reveal himself clearly; in every shimmer of truth, recognised as such, through the foggy speculations of philosophers, we seem to catch a glimpse of God's glorious being; in the joyful mirth of innocent happy children as well as in the peace and calm of a meditative saint, the presence of God seems to be writ large for any discerning eye. My God thus is not a loving and knowing God, far less all-loving, and all-knowing. He is love or knowledge itself. In the same way, he is not joyful but joy itself. This is no mere rhetorical hyperbole but is meant to be taken as sober truth.

Materialistically inclined as we naturally are, and depending heavily on our senses, the image of a material substance seems to have set for us the very standard of reality. It is clear that such an image will not fit my notion of God—God who has been equated by many sages with love and truth. Nobody can discover these in any material substance however fine.

How do I exist as spirit? Embodied though I am, the flesh and bone which compose my body, do not in themselves disclose my spiritual being. I exist as a spiritual being in thinking, feeling and willing. My spiritual nature

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or my being as spirit is manifested in my thoughts, feelings and volitions. In the same way, God's being may be disclosed in every act of genuine love or knowledge or innocent enjoyment. Just as I need not be equated with a passing thought, even though I realise my spiritual being in my thoughts, so God is not just an act of love, but the principle of love which shows itself unmistakably in every genuine instance of love. I find no absurdity in this view of God.

Although I am sincerely opposed to all current religious faiths, because of their dogmatic and sectarian outlook, I have never refrained from learning from the scriptures of various religions as well as from the founders of different faiths. From the Upanishads I have learnt that God is truth, knowledge and infinite (*satyam jnanam anantam Brahma*), that he is the zest or joy of life (*raso vai sah*). I cannot literally say in accordance with the Upanishads that I am God. (*aham Brahmasmi*) because I feel I am really far from my ideal. I can however well understand the Upanishadic saying to mean that I am in intention, though not in fact, one with my ideal. I have taken the Biblical exhortation 'Be Ye perfect even as your father in heaven is perfect' clearly to mean that I should try to shape myself after my ideal. I try to follow, as far as I can, Buddha's teachings, of desirelessness (*vāsanā vilaya*) and friendliness to all creatures (*sarvabhūte maitri*). I do not however think that the extinction of desire is possible in our earthly state or that I should have no desires at all. But I would certainly like to make them as mild and as little self-regarding as possible. Even though I cannot share the religious beliefs of many saints, I have nothing but admiration and respect for saints of all religions for their great devotion to other-worldly interests and renunciation of worldly goods.

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My trouble is that rightly or wrongly, I was early launched on a philosophical career with perhaps no proper qualification for it. But I took my job rather seriously. Being in this line, it has been my duty to pursue truth with understanding and reason. I had therefore to disabuse my mind of all assumptions and prejudices as far as possible, and try to see things for myself with the eye of reason. In consequence I could not uncritically accept the mythological and unhistorical beliefs which form part of many religions.

A philosopher, I understand, is a lover of wisdom or truth, who is not already in possession of it, but only seeks it in the spirit of a lover. If the pursuit is to be genuine, one has to admit that one has not yet reached the goal. The philosopher is thus bound to be both agnostic and sceptic. So I am agnostic, not in the sense that I believe knowledge is impossible, but in the sense that complete knowledge is not in my possession, nor is it likely to be mine in the near future.

Naturally, I am a sceptic too. Unless I have a genuine doubt I cannot enquire earnestly. I am not certainly at the end of my enquiries. Being thus an unbelieving sceptic, I cannot honestly accept any religious creed which makes a heavy demand on our faith. Let any philosopher, truly so called, declare, if he dare, that he has come to the end of his quest, and has fully fathomed the depth of reality. I cannot, and have therefore remained an agnostic and sceptic, unable to align myself with any religious group of men who are bound together by a common faith.

But I have not merely moved in the company of philosophers, but have lived in society in close association with men, women and children. I have also listened to poets and prophets, saints and seers. And I think my eyes have been opened to other values than truth, to love and

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friendship, to beauty and goodness of various kinds. I may be doubtful whether any particular statement about reality is true or false, but I am not doubtful whether truth is desirable. Along with truth, I recognise love and friendship, beauty and joy, kindness and honesty, as valuable in themselves, without recourse to any theory or utilitarian consideration. I am doubtful about so-called facts, but I am not doubtful about ends. Hence I can be a practical idealist in spite of my theoretical scepticism.

I am quite conscious that the views I am presenting here will be found very unsatisfactory, not only by the adherents of various current religions, but even by many others who are not particularly attached to any religion. They will, moreover, give rise, in an enquiring mind, to many serious questions, for which I have no ready and satisfactory answers.

Religious people may like to know whether there is any place for prayer and worship in the ordinary sense in my religion, and whether my God is likely to come on appeal to men's help in their troubles and tribulations. Honestly speaking, to such questions I have to return mostly negative answers (may be, with some qualification). Philosophers may ask how my ideal of love and truth is related to the real world, in which hatred and cruelty, deception and fraud, are so rampant; what are the chief values that enter into the making of my ideal ; whether there is a gradation among them and whether they form a unity or are all separate and discrete, etc. I have to confess that I do not yet clearly know the exact answers to most of these questions, I may have some halting answers for them, but I do not wish to increase the bulk of my essay by starting them here.

After all, I am not writing an essay in metaphysics or axiology, in which one may try to solve these difficulties.

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My object in this essay has been merely to state roughly my views about God and religion and in the process to clarify some of my ideas as far as I can. It is no shame for me to admit that I am largely an ignorant man, the keys to the mysteries of the universe are not certainly in my hands. I am somehow gropingly finding my way through life. Fortunately I have been granted, as I believe, some clear light in my sense of certain ultimate values, as I conceive them, which I have described as love, truth or knowledge, beauty and joy, and I try to shape my humble life in view of this light. It will need some further discussion to determine exactly what these values mean for me. But I believe each of them has a straight-forward sense for unsophisticated minds, and that is for the present enough for me. These values describe the ideal for me, and I have ventured to call this ideal, not irreverently, my God, and my entire religion, if I may call it such, would consist in my sincere appreciation and honest pursuit of this ideal.

3

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On the subject of this essay two opposite views may be held, one of them maintaining that philosophy is quite different from history of philosophy. It is implied in the disparaging remark sometime made nowadays about modern teachers of philosophy that they do not teach philosophy, but only history of philosophy. The antithesis is significant only on the supposition that philosophy is utterly different from the history of philosophy. This view is intelligible enough, because philosophy is concerned with the problem of reality—of man, God, and world, whereas history of philosophy is concerned with certain remarkable men and their philosophical opinions which are obviously a different matter from the problem of reality.

The other view is that philosophy is one with history of philosophy. There is a *prima facie* and superficial sense in which this view may be maintained. In this sense what is meant by the view is that when we learn philosophy we acquaint ourselves with the views of different philosophers and philosophy really consists of the philosophical work of different philosophers. In my opinion this view too is plausible enough; but I shall not stop to consider it here. I would rather try to bring out what appears to be the deeper significance of the view under consideration.

In the first place we should realise what history of philosophy is not and then we may be able to understand how it is identical with philosophy itself. History of philosophy is not concerned with isolated individuals and their views on subjects called philosophical. In this way we shall get mere history or, worse still, only personal monographs, whether we bind them in a single volume is a matter of convenience. They cannot constitute a work

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of history of philosophy properly so called, fit to be included in a philosophical curriculum. We must remember that history of philosophy is a philosophical subject and as such is not so much concerned with the series or succession of external events as with our apprehension of truth or reality. Now if truth or reality grasped in knowledge is what is properly called an idea and if our getting at this idea in our philosophical efforts may be conceived as the self-revelation of the idea itself, then our progress in philosophical knowledge which the history of philosophy is intended to trace, may well be regarded as the self-revealing evolution of the absolute idea. Regarded in this light, the subject-matter of history of philosophy coincides with the contents of philosophy itself. In this sense Hegel seems to have asserted the identity of philosophy with the history of philosophy. The order in which the idea manifests itself in its historical evolution coincides with the order in which it is conceived or revealed in logic in different stages with different degrees of adequacy. Hegel so far logicised history that it could be read off from his logic. Whether he was right or wrong in his conception of history or logic, the important point for us to notice is that according to Hegel the history of philosophy lays out before us in its different stages the very same truth which we endeavour to grasp in our philosophising, and in our gradual apprehension of this truth we have to pass through these very stages. The identity between philosophy and history of philosophy seems thus quite complete.

It is generally recognised nowadays that the idea of evolution which is historical and involves time is altogether distinct from the idea of logical development, which has no such implication and they cannot be identified in any intelligible sense. Just as there is enormous difficulty in the idea of a physical embodiment of a spiritual truth or in that of an incarnation of God (which is the same idea in

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a theological garb), so there is no less difficulty in identifying a logical advance with a historical process. Moreover, it is highly doubtful whether the ultimate or metaphysical truth is apprehended only gradually in different stages and whether in the history of philosophy we can see any regular advance from philosopher to philosopher. Who will say that Aristotle gave a better interpretation of truth than Plato? or that Hegel was on more familiar terms with the absolute than either Kant or Spinoza? One is not bound to believe that the absolute idea, of which philosophy is said to be in search, is itself a process either logical or historical.

Furthermore, Hegel attributes everything to the idea and left practically nothing for the individual philosopher to do. They were all submerged, in fact reduced to nothing, in the spiritual stream which is controlled by, or is itself, the absolute idea. We find it difficult to think that the man Plato or Kant did practically nothing of his own and was a mere helpless vehicle for the expression of a particular aspect of the absolute.

We are unable therefore to accept the identity of philosophy with history in this Hegelian sense. Is there any other sense in which the two can be identified?

Philosophy may be said to be concerned not so much with ideas as with problems. In fact every idea with which philosophy concerns itself may be said to typify a problem. In philosophy then we get a characteristic treatment of certain characteristic problems. Now history of philosophy may be read or written problem-wise as Windelband has done. He has, I believe, nowhere asserted the Hegelian thesis that philosophy is one with the history of philosophy. But in his treatment of the history of philosophy he seems to have put, in the place of the Hegelian evolution of concepts, the self-unfoldment of problems in such a way that the problems receive a kind of self-subsistence and

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significance quite independently of particular thinkers. If problems are of primary concern to philosophy and if they are studied in their genesis and necessary self-unfoldment in the history of philosophy, then history of philosophy becomes in consequence one with philosophy itself. Windelband has not claimed, as far as I know, that every stage in the development of a problem could be determined *a priori* beforehand. But it seems certainly to be implied by him that an earlier stage in the development of a problem can well be reconstructed. The problems are thus granted a kind of overpersonal being which is not affected in any way by the genius of any particular thinker. They do not come into being through an individual thinker and cannot be abolished or annulled by him. But this is to make these problems in a way absolute, quite beyond the control of particular thinkers. But the fact seems to point the other way. The great problems of philosophy do not exist for the majority of mankind. We owe to the genius of great thinkers, that these problems are conceived in their full breadth and sweep with any degree of adequacy. It is due again to the energy of particular thinkers that they get resolved in thought. Problems thus simply arise and get resolved in the minds of individual thinkers, and we cannot treat the problems as independent of the thinkers, who really create them, nurse and nourish and again resolve them in thought.

History of philosophy has no doubt to deal with problems, but for a real understanding of them it has to go beyond them. The problems arise even in the mind of a philosophising individual because of a certain condition of life and existence in which he finds himself. An individual is a unity and totality and his problem cannot be separated from the whole man. So if we have to understand any problem fully, we must take into account the whole man in whom the problem has its seat. It is because of

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considerations like this that Dr. Fritz Heinemann in an imposing paper in "Kant Studien" many years ago put forward a powerful plea for history of philosophy as history of man. I regret that I do not possess the requisite learning to elucidate and estimate this conception of history of philosophy. Besides my present subject is a modest one, namely the relation between philosophy and history of philosophy and it is beyond my scope to modify or enlarge the conception of history of philosophy itself. So I content myself merely with remarking that although philosophical problems are inseparable from the actual life of the philosopher and take their rise from some actual historical and cultural situation, they yet admit of being considered philosophically quite apart from any consideration of the life of the philosopher, the historical situation or the cultural background.

A recent writer, Mr. M. B. Foster, himself a close student of Hegel, has said "whatever may have been possible in past days there can be for us no genuine science of philosophy which is not based wholly on the study of the history of philosophy".* Indeed he has gone further and made a higher claim for the history of philosophy. "This study is not only indispensable to educate the judgment of one who is to philosophise sanely; it is the means by which he must continue to philosophise. To philosophise is to study the history of philosophy philosophically".* He has thus put forward two claims in favour of history of philosophy, one higher and the other lower. I have no difficulty in agreeing whole-heartedly with the lower of these claims, "that study of the history of philosophy is an indispensable propaedeutic stage in the training of a philosopher which he must have passed before

* *Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*, p. vii.

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his proper activity begins."* The dangers which he foresees as very likely to overtake this fate of philosophy, when this precondition of genuine philosophical activity is neglected, may not be quite apparent to every thoughtful person. "Nothing but the discipline of the historical study can preserve philosophy from both opposite excesses of sophistry and mysticism. Nothing else can stem the progressive absorption, at least of professional philosophers, into one or other of the opposite camps of a 'Realism', in which all the rigour of scientific method is applied to a small and diminishing number of problems of purely academic interest, and an 'Idealism', in which important subjects are treated indeed, but are treated as themes of a kind of imaginative speculation, of which even its devotees can hardly maintain that it is scientific." I appreciate his suggestion that present day realism lacks depth and is deficient in philosophical content and that much of modern idealism is mere imaginative speculation. But whether the cause or the cure of the trouble can be legitimately connected with the study of the history of philosophy is not at all quite obvious. However, I too firmly believe that we can acquire the art of real philosophising only from a deep and intensive study of some works of a great philosopher. But I do not think, I can follow Mr. Foster quite easily or closely when he makes the higher of these two claims, that is when he asserts that "to philosophise is to study the history of philosophy philosophically". He tries first to make out that philosophical insight can be developed only in the scientific study of a definite subject matter. Then he says that there is such a subject which the professional philosopher alone is fitted to study, namely the great works which constitute the material of the history of philosophy! Now it may or may not be true

* Ibid., p. viii.

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that genuine philosophical insight can be developed only in the scientific study of a definite subject matter. But even if it is, one is not bound to think that the great philosophical works alone constitute that subject matter. Logic, Ethics, Aesthetics may well be such a definite subject. If these are thought to be too abstract or not so definite or incapable of being studied scientifically, we may turn to mathematics or even some positive science. It may be difficult for a philosopher to study these subjects. But if philosophical insight can be developed only by a scientific study of a definite subject I do not see why any of these should not be utilised for this purpose.

It has to be noticed that Mr. Foster does not understand by history of philosophy what we ordinarily understand by it. "History of philosophy is not the study of the histories of philosophy, that is history of philosophy at second hand". He means by it the material of the history of philosophy, namely, the great philosophical works.

I shall now state my difficulties in regard to this whole position. I should not like to lay myself open to the charge of quibbling but really I find Mr. Foster's position a little confusing. He is not only asking us to learn how to philosophise from a study of great philosophical works, but is telling us that we must continue to philosophise through their means, "that to philosophise is to study the history of philosophy philosophically". He is not saying that any sort of study of the great philosophical works will be philosophy or philosophising. He is saying that to philosophise is to study the philosophical works philosophically. He is saying in effect that to do the work of a philosopher is to study the works of philosophers in the manner a philosopher does his works. It does not at all appear easy to get a clear and consistent meaning out of a statement of this kind. One might even suspect both

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circularity and infinite regress, harboured within this statement. When we want to learn what it is to do the work of a philosopher it is no use telling us that it is to do something after a manner a philosopher does his work. When you say that philosophy consists in the study of great philosophical works one might ask how the original works themselves became philosophical. Were they also studies of other philosophical works? This will lead to an infinite regress. If the people in past ages could philosophise independently of any previous philosophical works, why should we not be able to do so even now?

However, I am not at all interested in scoring a dialectical point against Mr. Foster. I am concerned to find out the substance of truth in his contention, for, in my opinion, he is trying to say something both important and true. In the first place, it is well to realise that Mr Foster is not perhaps trying to give a formal definition of philosophy. He seems to take it for granted that we understand in a general way what philosophy means and what a philosopher does. He also does not seem to be concerned with what a particular genius may or may not be able to do apart from any outside help. He seems rather to be concerned with the common run of students and teachers of philosophy, including those who write on the subject and his concern is to point out how their work can gain in depth and importance, acquire 'firmness and precision' as he would perhaps say. And it goes without saying that a philosopher certainly adds to his professional competence by a serious and intensive study of acknowledged masters of his subject. He will then not only understand better, but also will be better able to put and answer a genuinely philosophical question. The study of great philosophical works as a necessary training for a would-be-philosopher may be accepted by all without a demur. Our question really is how a philosopher after he

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has been trained is to continue his work as a philosopher in and through the study of such works. To get a clue to the answer of our question we must underline the word, philosophical, which is used to qualify our study of the great works. That is to say, to philosophise is not to study the great works in any way we like or can, but to study them philosophically. Now to study them philosophically means, in my view, first of all (a) to concentrate on their philosophical content and then (b) to see whether (i) it is supported by logic or reason and (ii) how far it accords with our experience of reality, and lastly (iii) whether it answers and resolves the philosophical questions which press upon our mind. If we can do all these on the basis of the material supplied by the great philosophical works, do we need anything more to complete our work as philosophers? I think it would do for most of us, if we understand by philosophising nothing more than work of this kind.

Now my question is, how far it is indispensable and sufficient, and whether it can be described in any proper sense as a study of the history of philosophy. I readily grant that we can genuinely philosophise in and through our study of the great philosophical works, if we carry on this study in the right spirit and in the proper way. I believe such serious study would be a better employment for us than giving ourselves up to imaginative speculation or pedantic discussion about the most superficial aspects of external things. Still I cannot but suppose that if one has an alert, sensitive and reflective mind, one would find enough problems for philosophic consideration, suggested by one's direct contact with reality, even without a study of great philosophical books. I therefore think that a study of great philosophical works although very necessary and highly beneficial for all of us, is not quite indispensable for our philosophic activity.

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Supposing that it is indispensable for all, can we consider that such a study, even when it is strictly philosophical is sufficient from the standpoint of philosophy and its possible progress? That is, should all our philosophical activities be confined to the philosophical study of great philosophical works, so that we need do nothing more to fulfil our destiny as philosophers? Here again I think I must return a negative answer. If our minds have some originality of their own, then in their reactions to the problems and answers contained in the great works, they are bound to go beyond them. Also a deeper consideration of any problem is itself bound to lead our minds beyond its original treatments and other problems will almost surely be suggested which will require to be treated independently and on their own account. It is absurd to suppose that the great minds of the past have finally formulated all philosophical problems in their infinite ramifications, and nothing more is left for us to do than merely to repeat and rehearse them in our mind.

Lastly, is a philosophical study of the great works really a study of the history of philosophy? Do these works, as philosophically considered, constitute the history of philosophy? Mr. Foster speaks of them as the material of the history of philosophy. Obviously they themselves are not the history and when we study them philosophically we do not study so much the words and sentences in which they are composed as the philosophical ideas and problems contained in them. A philosophical study of them would imply a consideration of them in respect of their logical validity and metaphysical significance. The ideas and problems as thus studied would present no historic character. The concept of history seems to involve the idea of temporal succession and progress. To get proper objects of historic study we have to view them in their

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progress and evolution. We must follow Hegel or Windelband. But this would be no philosophical study properly so called. In order to make it philosophical, Hegel has to logicise history. Historical progress meant, for him, in its philosophical significance, nothing but logical development. We have found reason to disagree with this point of view. It is difficult no doubt, for us to see how Hegel would be possible without Kant going before him, but Kant being given, we cannot say that Hegel must necessarily follow as a necessary consequence of Kantian thought, just as a conclusion follows from its premises. In passing from Kant to Hegel, we do not see any evolutionary revelation of truth, but only truth in its different aspects ; we do not get a continuous story but an altogether different story relating perhaps to the same matter. We thus find that a philosophical study of the philosophical works fails to give us any history and cannot be described as a study of the history of philosophy.

But although I have denied that such a study is quite indispensable to a philosopher and that it is sufficient to constitute all our philosophic activities, and although I am now saying that it is not properly a study of the history of philosophy, I entirely agree with the substance of Mr. Foster's contentions. Whatever may be the case with geniuses and really original minds, we ordinary workers in the field of philosophy must always turn to the masters, not only for our proper training, but for continuous enlightenment.

A study of the history of philosophy means for me a study of these masters. They represent different points of view, different types of mind, possibly different spiritual media in which truth reveals itself, in its different aspects. It may not be possible for any one of us to enter

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sympathetically into the spirit of more than one system of thought. Perhaps we are born either Kantians or Hegelians. But when a mind possesses the happy elasticity to be able to see things from the standpoint of a Kant as well as from that of a Hegel, it will have a better revelation of truth in the sense of seeing it in its different and alternative forms. Such a mind will entirely be liberated from intolerant dogmatism and will cease to regard any particular view of truth as revealed in a particular system (whether philosophical or religious) as the final and only one possible.

Epistemological Reflections

4

ON KNOWLEDGE

I wish to discuss certain questions connected with the problem of knowledge. These are, first, whether knowledge is possible, and, second, if possible, what kind of knowledge we can get in philosophy. Since it is not possible to discuss these questions intelligibly unless we know already what is meant by knowledge, I shall make an attempt to determine the meaning of this term also.

My first question is whether knowledge is possible. It may appear strange that such a question should be raised at all. The fact that we know proves beyond doubt that knowledge is possible. If we do not know, how do we raise the question at all? Since every question not only presupposes some knowledge, but also a question can be raised only in knowledge; we must ask it knowingly. But when we recall that there are sceptics and agnostics and also those who, although they believe in a kind of knowledge, not attainable by ordinary means or ordinary people, condemn all our so-called knowledge of science and history as rank ignorance, the question appears quite legitimate. The agnostic expressly denies the possibility of knowledge, and the sceptic, although he does not say either yes or no, being always in a vacillating state of doubt, says by implication that the definite attitude of sure knowledge is really unattainable or unjustifiable. In face of these attitudes of denial and doubt, the question may well be asked whether knowledge is possible. But professed sceptics and agnostics may be rare in these days. Still philosophers are not wanting who deny all our so-called knowledge. There are philosophers who say that there are no substances, so that all that we seem to know in terms of substance and attribute must be illusory. There are some philosophers who teach us that thought is incapable of reaching reality, so that what knowledge we seem to

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possess, in which thought is an essential element, cannot be real knowledge, and it is difficult to name any piece of knowledge in which thought is wholly absent. There are others for whom no objective knowledge is true knowledge, objectivity for them being synonymous with falsity. When you condemn as illusion all that goes by the name of knowledge among us, can we not, in our bewilderment, raise the question whether knowledge is possible at all? It is no use telling us then that since knowledge is implied by questioning itself, no question regarding the possibility of knowledge has any point. Because when all our direct (as it appeared to us) and undoubted knowledge is thrown overboard, we cannot be sure of the very thin and subtle kind of knowledge that is offered us by implication from our very question. So it cannot be denied that in view of the philosophical positions just mentioned, the question whether knowledge is possible is quite legitimate and significant.

What is necessary for the significance of the question is a possible denial or doubt regarding the possibility of knowledge. Let us now then try to see in what sense knowledge can possibly be doubted or denied. Let us, in other words, try to determine the meaning of the term knowledge, in the question : Is knowledge possible?

I have often taken the term knowledge as synonymous with consciousness or awareness, and have argued that it is not possible to define this term, because it is an ultimate and simple notion which cannot be further analysed. It might also be said that knowledge determines the meaning of every other term and there is nothing by which knowledge can be determined, so that we should take knowledge as self-evident, no definition of it being either necessary or possible. I do not think I can maintain this position now and the reasons for it, I hope, will presently appear.

ON KNOWLEDGE

When people deny or doubt the possibility of knowledge, they do not deny or doubt the possibility of consciousness as such. Consciousness is such a patent fact that it is impossible to deny or doubt it or its possibility. We can deny or doubt what appears in consciousness but consciousness itself cannot be doubted or denied. It is consciousness that makes doubt or denial possible, and they cannot reasonably be directed against what constitutes their ground, as also the ground of any other mental act. It is thus clear that when anybody says that knowledge is not possible he does not, and in fact cannot, mean that consciousness is not possible ; that the denial of knowledge is consistent with the affirmation of consciousness. We find nothing strange in this position when we reflect that, although knowledge is a mode of consciousness, consciousness has other modes besides that of knowledge. The volitional and emotional modes of consciousness are distinguished from the cognitive mode. Moreover, we know cases of error and illusion, which are admittedly not cases of knowledge, but nobody will ever contend that there is no consciousness present in them. Thus it is evident that we cannot equate knowledge with consciousness, but must regard it as a specific mode of consciousness.

A case of error or illusion is not a case of knowledge, because what we are conscious of in such a case is not a real object. When we see a snake in the place of a stick, the snake as thus seen is no real snake at all. If the snake were real as it appeared it would be a case of knowledge and not illusion. If this is so, then I think we can define knowledge in the following way : Knowledge is a mode of consciousness in which we are aware (conscious) of an object as it really is. Here knowledge is defined in terms of consciousness and object. We admit that consciousness is indefinable, but knowledge need not be so, inasmuch

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as we seem to be able to assign its genus as well as its differentia. Consciousness gives the genus of knowledge and the 'reality' of its object defines its specific character as distinguished from other modes of consciousness. By the object of a mode of consciousness we mean what appears in that mode. When the object is real as it appears in a mode of consciousness, then the mode of consciousness is one of knowledge. In all other modes of consciousness, the object has no reality, at least no being apart from and independently of the mode of consciousness in which it appears. The object of an illusion, for instance, has no reality, at least no being apart from the illusion. By the reality of an object of knowledge people have often understood its independent existence. Of course the concept of reality and that of independent existence are not exactly identical ; but in the present context, we should not object if the reality of an object of knowledge is held to involve its independent existence. Independent existence here does not mean independence of all things whatever. The independent existence of an object is to be understood only in reference to the act of knowledge by which it is revealed. When we say that in the case of knowledge the object appears as it really is, we mean that the object of knowledge has a nature of its own, which is not dependent on or constituted or created or otherwise modified by the act of knowledge in which it is revealed. The thing may be as dependent as you like, on various other things, but if it is to be known at all, it cannot be dependent on the act of consciousness which is to be its knowledge. If the thing had no independent being or nature of its own, we could not significantly speak of it as appearing in knowledge 'as it really is'. 'As it really is' then comes to mean 'as it exists independently of the act of knowing.'

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When we have thus interpreted the reality of an object of knowledge, we have practically left no room for an objection of this kind. Since an object appears, in whatever mode of consciousness, it is always real at least as an appearance, and its reality cannot be a distinguishing mark of knowledge. Because when an object is real only as an appearance, it has no being apart from the mode of consciousness in which it appears. Moreover for an object to be real as an appearance is not the same thing as to be real as it appears. In the former case there may be only appearance and no corresponding reality, in the latter there is correspondence between reality and appearance.

When we make it the distinguishing mark of knowledge (which is a mode of consciousness) that its object should not be dependent on it, we imply that there are other modes of consciousness in which the objects are dependent on them, and may be in a way constituted by the modes of consciousness in which they appear. We feel e.g. pleasure and pain and they have no being apart from the modes of consciousness in which they are felt. Pleasure and pain can scarcely be distinguished from our feelings of them, as an object of knowledge can be distinguished from our knowledge of it. Can we then know such things as pleasure and pain? Since they are dependent on the modes of consciousness in which they appear, it seems they are no proper objects of knowledge, according to our definition. Should we then suppose that we do not know them at all?

Even if it be true that we cannot know pleasure and pain in our sense of the term 'know', it cannot be denied that we feel them. By denying knowledge, we do not deny consciousness, and so even if we have no knowledge of pleasure and pain, our consciousness of them may still be quite vivid. But it is not necessary to disown knowledge

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regarding these subjective states. Pleasure and pain as subjective states have a determinate nature of their own, which may well be known, although not by the very same acts of feeling by which they are constituted. An act of feeling is not an act of knowledge, and so when we have feeling of pleasure, we may not know the pleasure by the same act of the mind. The pleasure comes into being along with the feeling and is not already there to be known by us. But when the subjective state has already arisen with a definite nature of its own, it may be revealed in its proper character to our introspective knowledge. If introspection is to be of any value, it should be so conducted as to leave the subjective state introspected into quite unaffected by it.

This may be our ideal; but does not every act of introspection modify to some extent the subjective state into which we introspect? The introspective attitude itself is an interference, and tends to blunt the edge of our unreflective feeling. Moreover, introspection is possible only when the subjective state has already arisen ; but have we any reason to suppose that the subjective state will remain the same in spite of the lapse of time (although very slight) which is required for the introspective act to come on the scene? These considerations tend to show that if a feeling is to be known only by a subsequent act of introspection, it may not be known in its proper character. What seems necessary is that a feeling, if it is to be known in its proper character should be known right at the time when it is felt.

This also appears perfectly possible, from what we know of the working of our mind. We may even go further and say that this is actually the case always. We have distinguished between different modes of consciousness, e.g. between a mode of knowledge and a mode of feeling.

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But this determination of a mode of consciousness into feeling or knowledge is not like the determination of colour into specific colours which are incompatible with each other. A state of feeling is never incompatible with a state of knowledge as brown is incompatible with red. There is no obvious contradiction between feeling and knowledge as there is between brown and red. Not only are the different states of consciousness not incompatible with each other, but they actually run into each other, so that a state of knowledge may and often does coexist with a state of feeling. When I see (know) a flower, I may also appreciate (feel) its beauty. Normally a mode of consciousness is very complex, having within it the elements of cognition and feeling, and possibly also of conation. In our present civilised (intellectualised) state, it is often possible to reduce the elements of feeling and conation to a minimum, so that they may be said to be practically absent. When I see the table before me or contemplate three angles of a triangle as being equal to two right angles, I experience no appreciable feeling or activity. It is otherwise with cognition. It is difficult (I should say, impossible for us) to bid goodbye to all cognition, and lapse into a state of mere feeling or mere activity. As far as I can see now, I find cognition to be an inseparable element of all our conscious states so that whenever I act or feel in any particular way, I have no special difficulty in finding out (knowing) what I am feeling or doing. This feeling or doing is of a determinate nature and is not dependent on or made by my finding. If what I have said is correct, then we may hold that we can even know things which are dependent on our consciousness, the modes of consciousness, on which they depend being logically distinct, but not temporally separate from the knowledge of them.

Let us now return to our main topic. We have defined knowledge as a mode of consciousness in which the object

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appears as it really is. Bearing this definition in mind, how should we answer the question whether knowledge is possible? Now, to begin with, there appears nothing impossible in this notion of knowledge. There is no contradiction, no obvious infringement of any law of thought, in the idea of an object appearing in a mode of consciousness as it really is. We may wonder and wonder at the fact of consciousness ; we may not really understand how the character of an object gets revealed in knowledge; but for all this, we cannot pronounce knowledge to be an impossible phenomenon. We may then affirm that knowledge is possible. And very often we feel that it is actual also. We pass through modes of consciousness in which we think the objects appear as they really are. These we take to be cases of knowledge, and so we cannot doubt that knowledge is possible.

We no doubt take certain modes of consciousness as modes of knowledge (e.g. seeing a tree or a friend), but these may be pure assumptions or beliefs. How do we know that we have actual knowledge in them? How can we be sure that the objects appearing in those modes are really as they are in themselves independently of our knowledge? Can we be said really to know when we are not and cannot be quite sure?

Our question was whether knowledge is possible and our affirmative answer to this question stands, even though we may not be sure in any particular case that we have actual knowledge. But in no particular case we can be sure that we have actual knowledge, we gain practically nothing by saying that knowledge is possible, for our interest is in actual knowledge, and it cannot be satisfied by the mere idea that knowledge is possible. We should then be prepared to hold that our being sure or not sure does not really matter in our actually having real knowledge, or, at least, that, although we cannot be sure in our supposed cases of knowledge they are still based

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on grounds which render them very likely to be true. In the definitions we have given of knowledge, we have not made 'sureness' or certitude an essential element of knowledge. We have merely said that the object should appear in consciousness as it really is. We have thus knowledge when we are conscious of an object as it really is.

But if this is all, then we should be said to know even when we doubt or believe, seeing that in both doubt and belief there is certainly consciousness of the object and it may very well be in fact as it appears in consciousness.

This objection against our definition does not really hold. For in doubt what appears in consciousness is not the object merely, but also its contrary or something different from it. We doubt whether it is A or B, and it is impossible that any object should be in fact as it appears in doubt, since no object can be both itself and its other. And in belief we have in one sense something more, and in another sense something less, than knowledge, and in either a deviation from knowledge. When we believe we have a subjective feeling of assurance which may be more or less, i.e., strong or feeble; we may firmly believe or only half-heartedly. This is an additional element which is absent in knowledge. In knowledge we have merely the consciousness of the object which cannot be more or less. Belief again is an act of faith by which we seek to reach the object to which we are not carried over by the force of objective evidence. We are not said to believe, but to know, what appears evident to us and to every normal consciousness. In belief we make a jump because of insufficient evidence. This involves a subjective activity which should be absent in knowledge. In knowledge the object reveals itself to us by its own strength (evidence), and we remain as passive as possible, because only so can we see the object as it is in itself. Belief seeks to accomplish by a subjective jump what is accomplished in

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knowledge by objective evidence, and is thus less than knowledge. We therefore conclude that when we have no doubt in our mind and are not conscious of having taken a jump, or done anything, our consciousness of an object may well be a case of knowledge. But can we have a case of knowledge about which no doubt can be raised? Even when I do not doubt, it may be because I am credulous and not because the knowledge is true. If a man tells me a story and I implicitly believe, it will not mean that I have real knowledge or that the story is true. Again, we wanted a passive state of mind in order to get knowledge. But can we really know anything with a passive mind? Is our mind ever wholly passive? Psychologists tell us that our mind is always active and at least, knowledge is not possible without being active in some way. How can we meet these difficulties? Let us see.

It may be possible to doubt every case of knowledge, but this theoretical possibility of doubt is no actual doubt. The question is whether the knower himself entertains any doubt in his mind when he thinks he knows. This absence of doubt, moreover, is only a negative test of knowledge. I cannot know when I doubt, but this does not mean that I really know when I do not doubt. For actual knowledge, the essential thing is that the object should appear as it really is, and in order to secure this point, we have to see that the object has not been interfered with in any way by any subjective acts. Here we pass on to consider the second objection. We are not for eschewing all kinds of mental activity from knowledge, but only those which are likely to distort the object or to set up some kind of mental construction or subjective fancy in the place of objective fact. Our mind is often in a state of distraction and some kind of special activity may be necessary to keep the mind steady and in a fit condition to receive the revelation of the object. Some activity may always be necessary to bring

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the mind and the senses to a condition fit for knowledge. But knowledge itself is never an act. It happens as a revelation without making any change in reality, and an act is always understood as making some change somewhere in reality. 'Making change' is no part of the meaning of knowledge as it is that of an act.

But how are we to be sure that we have not acted, that there is no subjective admixture in the object we think we know, seeing that many times we fall into illusions to which we feel we have not contributed anything, but which after all must be products of our troubled fancy? We readily acknowledge the force of this objection. We know that illusion is a fact and a standing reproach to human intelligence. But what can we do? The fact that we are sometimes mistaken should make us careful in accepting as genuine what offers itself as a case of knowledge. But if after due examination it still appears as a case of knowledge, we have no other alternative than to accept it as such. After all nobody can or should disregard the evidence of his own consciousness. If the few cases of error you have yourself experienced have so powerfully influenced your mind that you have lost all sense of knowledge and nothing appears in your consciousness without being doubted, I cannot undertake to lay to rest your all-consuming scepticism and to prove to you that the table you see before you is a real table and not an illusory one. I however find myself in a different case. The cases of error which I myself have seen, have not so impaired or improved my psychology that I can no longer apprehend anything with a feeling of knowledge. Logically, too, I find the fact that there have been some mistakes, quite insufficient to lead to the momentous conclusion that there is no knowledge at all. In these circumstances I accept with natural piety what is felt to be a case of knowledge, even after a cautious self-examination.

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One may argue : Granted that from previous cases of error, we cannot prove that the present case is one of error, but, from the same ground, we cannot also prove that the present case is one of knowledge. The argument is beside the point. We have not started with an indeterminate position, trying to arrive at a determinate one. We are not in a state of doubt hesitating between two alternatives, so that without positive argument we could not hold on to a definite position. But we are already in a definite position; we start with a feeling of knowledge, and if we are to be dislodged from this position, some conclusive argument must be offered to prove us wrong, and no such argument, so far as we are aware, has ever been offered.

We have almost said that when we have the feeling of knowing an object, there can be no argument to prove us false. Probably this is an overstatement. What is meant is that, barring obvious cases of error and others in which empirical considerations have shown the object to be non-existent, in which case of course the feeling of knowledge cannot be sustained, there is no theoretical argument to prove that consciousness of independent objects as such must be false.

But have we not heard of contemporary philosophers who declare that our knowledge is confined to *sensa* only and the so-called knowledge of physical (independent) objects is an assumption? Have we forgotten the teachings of Kant according to whom things-in-themselves are unknown and unknowable? Lastly do we not know of mystics for whom objective knowledge as such is illusory?

It is impossible to discuss here all that may be urged against us from the standpoints of these different types of thought. We may only summarily state our view in regard to these positions. (1) We cannot regard *sensa* as possible objects of knowledge at all, inasmuch as they

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are admittedly dependent on our ways of knowing and have no independent being which is essential to an object of knowledge. In our view they are mere abstractions from physical objects, which are the primary objects of knowledge. We never meet with any *sensa* unassociated with physical objects.

(2) According to Kant things-in-themselves are not known, mainly because our knowledge is possible only through the forms of sensibility and understanding, and these forms being peculiar to human understanding not inherent in things themselves, we can never know things as they are in themselves. He further says that we have a *priori* knowledge of the object, because it is an appearance; if it were a thing in itself no *a priori* knowledge would be possible. I cannot with easy conscience deal summarily with this view which comes from a master mind and which has for good or ill influenced the whole course of modern philosophy. But to examine this view in detail would require a volume to itself. Since I cannot deal with this matter adequately I am content to indicate here briefly my personal view in regard to it. First of all, I deny we have any *a priori* knowledge of the object worth the name. Secondly, I cannot regard the so-called forms of understanding as merely the ways of my knowing the object. I should not have the sense of knowing at all if I did not regard these forms as features of the object itself. Knowing to me is not relating things in some peculiar ways (in accordance with the categories), but apprehending things with their relations which are as objective as the things themselves. I am conscious that in stating my views in this way, I am not so much meeting the Kantian position as ignoring it. But unfortunately I cannot do better now.

(3) Coming to the mystic we find that he is an introvert; he wants to turn away from the world, and as an

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extreme step, denies the object altogether. But I know of no philosophical argument which justifies this denial. An argument will represent a definite thought and thought is always objective. We are not likely to be much impressed by a thought which seeks to deny its own foundation (object). Moreover, the mystic does not rely so much on argument as on his all-illuminating vision, in which there is no sense of objectivity. Even supposing that such a vision is possible there is nothing to show that all reality is concentrated into this vision.

We may however consider here, both for its own sake and as an introduction to my next point, an argument which the mystic may use in order to show that his unobjective vision or intuition fulfils the ideal of philosophic knowledge. It is always possible, one may argue, to doubt our objective knowledge because, as our knowledge has no essential relation with the object (we think) we have the knowledge, there is no guarantee that the object is there also. The possibility remains always open that the object appearing in a mode of consciousness, which is taken to be knowledge, may be absent. In other words, objective knowledge cannot guarantee its own validity and is therefore said to lack self-evidence. But when the object is dropped and we are left with pure knowledge, there is nothing which can ever be doubted; we get knowledge which is self-evident and absolutely certain. If philosophy seeks certitude, certitude of the most perfect kind can be attained in pure intuition which is free from the distinction of subject and object.

A high claim is here made on behalf of objectless intuition as fulfilling the ideal of philosophic knowledge. We have to consider what kind of knowledge is really sought in philosophy, and whether its demand can be satisfied by the sort of intuition offered by the mystic. What

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we seek in philosophy is knowledge of reality as a whole, and when with this knowledge we have also certitude, it will no doubt be considered as an additional merit. But certitude or self-evidence by itself never defines the ideal of philosophic knowledge. I am most certain that I exist, but I can never think that I have reached the goal of philosophy in this knowledge, because this knowledge never sums up for me the knowledge of entire reality. The most essential thing is that we should strive after knowledge of reality as a whole and try to achieve it with as high a degree of certitude as is humanly possible, absolute certitude being (in our opinion) unattainable in such an undertaking. When we come to consider the mystic intuition we find it difficult to give it the name of knowledge even, for if it is knowledge, it is a knowledge in which nothing is known, and this is not what we understand by knowledge. You say it is self-evident and absolutely certain, but certain of what? and what does it evidence? Supposing that it is knowledge and it evidences itself, can we take it to be knowledge of reality as a whole? I imagine the intuition says nothing on this point. We may regard this intuition as a fact or reality, but there is no reason to suppose that this is the whole reality which we seek to know in philosophy. There are numerous other claimants to reality and no effective means has ever been suggested to dispose of their claims except that of shutting the eye against them. It thus appears that mystic intuition, far from offering the kind of knowledge we seek in philosophy, is philosophically quite barren. It cannot answer a single philosophical question because it is absolutely inarticulate. It cannot be presented in a thought or speech and is therefore the most irrelevant thing that can be brought forward in a philosophical discussion.

What sort of knowledge then do we get in philosophy? We have already said that in philosophy we seek to know

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reality as a whole. This knowledge cannot be intuitive. As Kant said, all our intuitions are sensuous ; and it seems plain that the entire reality cannot be presented in a sense-intuition. The only other instrument of knowledge, left at our disposal, is thought, because thought and sense are the only instruments of knowledge known to us. (I am using the word 'sense' in a comprehensive meaning, as covering both sensation and feeling). Now, what thought can achieve is a theory, so that what we get in philosophy at the end is no more than a theory designed to explain and coordinate all the recognised facts of experience. We are supposed to be in contact with reality in our experience, and so a tolerable view of the whole reality can emerge only when all the facts of our experience have been organised into a comprehensive and coherent theory. The facts to be considered are so multifarious and complicated that the best theory that human ingenuity can devise to cover them all can at most be only more or less probable. Unless in collusion with some religious dogma or some other deep-seated prejudice, a philosophical theory, resting on intellectual grounds alone, can never claim absolute certainty. A theory may be very comprehensive and quite consistent, but still it cannot exclude all other possible theories, and so can never establish itself as the truth. To set up any particular theory as the only possible theory on any matter especially in philosophy, is to betray intellectual blindness and poverty of imagination.

But if a philosophical theory is only more or less probable, can it give us knowledge at all? I confess that a philosophical theory does not represent the kind of knowledge which is possible of particular facts that are available for direct intuition. From the nature of the case, reality as a whole cannot be known in the way we know its parts. The parts may be directly perceived, but the whole

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can be comprehended only in a general theory. A theory is not presented as a given fact ; it is a mental construction. So in entertaining a theory we never have the feeling of directly knowing a fact. But the theory is constructed in the interest of knowledge, and it does fulfil the condition of knowledge when it represents in idea the actual constitution of reality itself. This is the belief of the philosopher.

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It is not uncommon in a philosophical discussion that one is told that what one claims to know is not really known but only believed. When I say that I know physical objects, I may be told that I do not really know them, but only believe them to exist. In such a case a distinction is surely made between knowledge and belief. But what exactly is meant by this distinction? It may be that physical objects are not the sort of entities that can be known at all, or it may be that, although physical objects can be both known and believed, I cannot be said to know them, unless I have proved that they exist. In one case, although belief and knowledge are both taken to be cognitive states or attitudes of the mind, certain objects are supposed to be proper to belief and certain others to knowledge; so that the distinction between knowledge and belief would seem to lie not so much in themselves as in the kind of objects apprehended through them. In the second case, in which a proved thing only is said to be known, the distinction is made also on objective grounds. But apart from any consideration of the object, knowledge and belief may even be seen to be intrinsically distinct, so that an expert psychologist would be able to decide, by an introspective scrutiny, when he is in a state of knowledge and when he is in a state of belief.

The proposition that there are certain objects in reality which cannot be known, but have merely to be believed, will not commend itself to the modern mind. Nobody will deny that there are many things in the world which we do not know, but that there are things in reality inherently incapable of being known by any mind will not be acceptable to anybody today. So it seems that the distinction between knowledge and belief cannot be so

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conveniently effected, as was probably done by Plato, by separating the realm of belief from the realm of knowledge.

We cannot also distinguish knowledge from belief by confining knowledge to what is proved or demonstrated. We can prove a conclusion only on the basis of certain premises which must be known independently. If the premises were to be proved in every case before they could be known, we should be unable to begin any proof. As McTaggart says, 'nothing can be proved unless we start from something already known, and if we could know nothing unless it were proved, we could never start at all.' We have therefore to accept that things may be known, even though not proved. So the ground of distinction between knowledge and belief cannot lie in the fact that one is supported by proof and the other is not.

It seems more plausible that knowledge and belief should in themselves be distinguished from each other by their very meanings. Let us enquire what these meanings may be.

Although the word 'knowledge' is used in different senses, some philosophers claim that knowledge, in the strict sense, is *sui generis*, and is not further analysable. It may be true that the term is not strictly definable; but nevertheless it cannot be denied that we know very well what sort of thing knowledge is, and unless we can express what we mean by knowledge, we can hold no intelligible discussion about it. Knowledge is a state of consciousness and consciousness or awareness, I admit, is absolutely indefinable. From various signs you may infer correctly, whether I am conscious or not, but if you have not already realised in yourself what consciousness is, I shall never be able to make you understand what consciousness means, by any signs whatever. The fact is that consciousness shows forth every thing else, but it itself cannot be shown.

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Knowledge however is not in such a bad case. Knowledge, as we have said, is a state of consciousness, but there are other states of consciousness, which are not knowledge, and from which we distinguish knowledge. Knowledge, therefore, beside possessing the indefinable characteristic of consciousness, must possess some other characteristic, by which it is distinguished from other conscious states. Feeling, willing and even imagining are conscious states or processes and they are not knowledge. In them too, we are, no doubt, conscious of some object, but the object is not taken to be real in itself, or apart from the state of consciousness in which it appears as an object. I take knowledge to be a state of consciousness which is an awareness of an object as real in itself.

And what about belief? When we believe anything we are also conscious of some object and we take the object to be real, but we are not aware of it as real. But what is the distinction between taking an object to be real and being aware of it as real? The distinction between belief and knowledge seems to lie in this.

Some people seem to suppose that this 'taking a thing to be real' is nothing else than a blind disposition. Mr. Braithwaite for instance, analyses 'I believe the proposition p ' into two factors : (1) I entertain p and (2) I have the disposition to act as if p were true. To entertain a proposition is merely to understand what it says, without believing or disbelieving it. We can well understand the statement that the Ganges is on fire without believing or disbelieving it. We can think of A as being B without believing or disbelieving that A is B and without knowing whether A is B or not. When I have to ascertain whether I believe a particular proposition, I have to find out two things: First, whether I entertain the proposition, and, second, whether I have the disposition to act as if the

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proposition were true. The first can be easily found out by introspection. There is some difficulty about the second, because my disposition depends on the total state of my mind and body and has reference to my future behaviour. My disposition does not reveal itself either to myself or to others directly by itself. It shows itself only when suitable external circumstances occur. The disposition can be expressed only in some such hypothetical propositions : If certain things happened, I would act in such and such a way.

I cannot suppose that this behaviouristic explanation of belief is quite satisfactory, not only because there may be beliefs which are not at all relevant to any action, but specially because belief is a phenomenon of conscious life and so should be capable of being defined in terms of conscious attributes, without any recourse to unconscious dispositions. When I am asked as to whether I have a particular belief, I seem quite able to answer either Yes or No without any consideration of my future actions under any circumstances, which would not be the case if my disposition were, in any way, part of the definition of my belief. Mr. Braithwaite does not accept the view that belief is nothing but entertainment with conviction, because he asserts he can very well believe a proposition without feeling any conviction with regard to it. I am inclined to doubt whether this assertion is quite correct.

Mr. Price has given, so it seems to me, a deeper analysis of belief. He too distinguishes two elements in it, (1) the entertaining of a proposition, and (2) the assenting to or adopting that proposition. We have already seen what is meant by entertaining a proposition. We need to understand here only what is meant by, or involved in, assenting to or adopting a proposition. According to Mr. Price we begin by entertaining several propositions,

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which are mutually exclusive, and for some reason or other, we assent to or adopt one and dissent from or reject the others. The process of assenting seems to consist of two elements, one volitional and the other emotional. When we assent to a proposition, we seem to prefer it or decide in favour of it, we make up our mind that something is so and so. Our attitude is the same as when we decide or make up our mind to do a thing. This is the volitional element. When we have assented to a proposition, we are no longer impartially considering the different alternatives but have taken a plunge or come down on one side of the fence, as Mr. Price has graphically expressed it. Assent has also an emotional side. When we assent to a proposition, we have a feeling of sureness or confidence about it. It is to be noted that the volitional factor admits of no degree, it is always absolute. Either we decide in favour of a proposition or we do not. But the emotional factor may have all sorts of degrees, as can be seen from such expressions as 'I rather think', 'I suppose', 'I think', 'I am sure' or 'I am quite sure' that such and such is the case.

When we assent to a proposition, we prefer it to others. This means that several alternatives must be present to the mind, so that we may assent to one or prefer it to the rest. Further, constituted as we are, we cannot simply blindly prefer a proposition. We must know some grounds or facts which make one proposition more probable than others. Belief proper seems to involve all this. But there are cases in which many alternatives do not suggest themselves to us. A single idea comes before the mind and we assent to it unhesitatingly without even considering whether there are any grounds for it. Mr. Price describes such a case as acceptance and says that in it we do not really assent to a proposition but simply do not dissent from it. I am not sure whether there is any essential

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difference between belief proper and acceptance. But, apart from these niceties, I have no difficulty in accepting Mr. Price's analysis of belief as involving (a) entertainment of a proposition with (b) the volitional element of assent and (c) the subjective feeling of sureness (of whatever degree) about it. My difficulty with Mr. Price's position begins when he insists on a sharp distinction between knowledge and belief. In his opinion it is impossible to know and to believe the same thing at the same time. If I know that *A* is *B*, I cannot at the same time believe that *A* is *B*. The reason for his holding this view is that according to him, knowledge is, by definition, infallible and indubitable, while belief is essentially fallible and open to doubt, and it is surely self-contradictory to say that one and the same thing is both fallible (belief) and infallible (knowledge). Mr Price admits that in common usage, the word 'knowledge' means no more than reasonable belief. We are said very often to know things, which, in point of fact we merely reasonably believe, and if he still adheres to the strict sense, it is because common usage itself is not consistent. On the one hand, it gives the name of knowledge to reasonable belief and on the other, it refuses to admit that knowledge can be mistaken. No one will say that 'in middle ages, men *knew* that the earth was flat but in fact, it is not so.' Mr. Price's idea is that in a situation called knowledge, a particular or a fact is directly present to our consciousness and it can never be wrong.

Before we accept this view of knowledge, we have to ask what instances we have got of knowledge in this sense. It is admitted that the range of our knowledge is very limited indeed. We are said to know such particulars as sense-data and the general principles of logic and mathematics. Sense-data are inventions of modern philosophy ; and the principles of logic are high-grade abstractions of thought which could not have been known to mankind from the

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beginning. Are we to suppose that before mankind could conceive of sense-data and the abstract principles of logic, it was wholly devoid of knowledge, that it did not know at all?

In what sense is a sense-datum known? When I see a brown patch, does the sensum exist where I see it to appear? If it does not, then my assumed knowledge is mere illusion. Has the sensum any being apart from my act of knowing it? If it has not, it is no proper object at all, and there can be no knowledge of it.

It may be argued that even in an illusion there is no doubt that I am sensing a sensum. But then what I know in that case is not a sensum, but myself as having a sensum. Am I sensing when I am dreaming? Can I always be sure whether I am sensing or imagining?

As for logical and mathematical principles, they are concerned merely with abstract concepts, and cannot give us real knowledge unless applied to or asserted of concrete facts. Thus it seems to me that the alleged cases of knowledge in the strict sense are not knowledge at all.

I can only dogmatically state here what I understand by knowledge and you have to see whether it agrees with your understanding and whether you can accept my analysis either wholly or in part.

Knowledge is always knowledge of a thing that exists. Mere emergence of a content in consciousness does not constitute a case of knowledge unless the content can be referred to reality. Two things seem to be necessary. We must be conscious of some character and assert it of reality. A mere particular or a bare 'it' is not known nor does a homeless character, unattached to any particular thing, even enter our knowledge. When we are aware of a content and have an unmistakable sense of reality in regard to it, we may be said to be in a state of knowledge.

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But unfortunately the sense of reality with regard to some contents cannot long be maintained and gets dissipated in course of further experience. In such cases we apply the name of belief to our previous experience and no longer call it knowledge. But so long as the sense of reality was present, there was nothing in the subjective experience as such to distinguish it from a state of real knowledge. As Mr. Taylor has pointed out, the distinction between knowledge and belief cannot be made out by any psychological scrutiny. When men in the middle ages thought that the earth was flat, their state of mind was not in any way different from that of perfect knowledge.

I am therefore inclined to think that there is no radical difference between belief and knowledge as we have it. When we feel that the sense of reality associated with any content needs no justification or is quite well-founded, we use the word knowledge, and when we find that it needs justification or is not quite well-founded, we use the word belief. Knowledge is a subjective experience with an objective reference, but there is nothing in the subjective experience itself which can guarantee the validity of the objective reference. It can be validated only by further experience or by some objective considerations. All our knowledge therefore is always theoretically open to doubt. Mr. Price says that in knowledge a particular (or a fact) is directly present to consciousness. But I suggest that we never know an uncharacterised particular and whether the character really inheres in the particular, we can never know for certain from the state of consciousness in which it is revealed. The being there of a content does not literally come out in any act of consciousness. In cognitive terms, it means no more than an assertion, and assertion always requires, theoretically at least, some justification.

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KNOWLEDGE AND ITS OBJECT

Is there any relation between knowledge and its object? If there is, what sort of relation is that? Can we determine from this relation anything about the nature and being of the object known? I propose to discuss these questions briefly in this paper and shall attempt to give some answers to them.

Whenever we think of knowledge, we think of it as having an object. To know is to know something. Knowledge thus implies object and goes with it. Since knowledge and object go together, it seems we must suppose that they are related, for relation is nothing but the togetherness of things. Moreover, as knowledge implies object, we cannot but think that knowledge must be related with object, because one thing cannot imply another without being related with it. The chair on which I am sitting is not related to the coming German Election and cannot by any means imply it. On the other hand, the chair as a constructed object implies a maker and is so related to the carpenter who made it. Thus there is a *prima facie* case in favour of some relation being present between knowledge and its object.

But one may deny that knowledge is related to its object if one holds (1) that knowledge does not imply any object, or (2) that there are no objects, or (3) that knowledge is identical with its object, or (4) that knowledge itself is a relation and does not need to be further related, or (5) that the character of knowledge is such that it cannot be related to anything else, or (6) that no real relation is possible between knowledge and its object. Let us consider these points.

1. We are not at present interested either to deny or

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to affirm that here is such a thing as pure knowledge in which nothing is known. But surely there are cases of knowledge in which objects are known. In fact our ordinary notion of knowledge requires that there should be an object if there is to be any knowledge. We do not however mean to insist here that knowledge must always have an object. We want simply to know whether and how knowledge is related to its object when there is an object given to it.

2. Since we have chosen to consider only the cases of knowledge in which objects are given, we cannot here entertain the hypothesis that there are no objects at all. To think that there are objects and objects are known may be an error, but we are concerned here with the analysis of this erroneous position, taking it to be true.

3. If knowledge were absolutely and literally identical with its object, there would be no sense in discussing the relation between them. But it seems impossible to identify knowledge with its object. When I know a book, I cannot say that my knowledge of the book is the book. If my knowledge were identical with the book, the material characteristics of the book would be the characteristics of my knowledge, which is certainly not the case. My knowledge is not heavy or thick as the book is. Moreover I know a book and I also know a table. If knowledge were identical with its object, the table would be identical with my knowledge which again is identical with the book, and so the table would be identical with the book which is absurd. Some difference has to be granted between knowledge and its object and so the question of their relation becomes significant.

4. Is knowledge a mere relation? Relation between what? The knowledge-relation can exist only between the subject and the object. But what is the subject? The subject must be defined as that which knows. But to know is, according to this view, to be related in a particular way,

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(since knowledge is a mere relation). We thus find that if we are to view knowledge as a mere relation, one of the terms turns out to be such that its whole being is constituted by this relation. But it is absurd that a particular relation should constitute the whole being of a term. We cannot therefore regard knowledge as a mere relation. Even Alexander who speaks of knowledge-relation speaks of it in a secondary sense.

5. This is an important issue. There are people who think that we cannot assert any relation between knowledge and its object. If we are to assert any relation, both the terms of the relation must be given. But object alone is given and knowledge is never given, and so we cannot assert any relation between them. If we still assert some relation between knowledge and its object, we shall degrade knowledge to the status of the given and thus deprive it of its real character, and so the asserted relation will not be really between knowledge and its object, but between two objects merely.

But is it a fact that we can assert a relation only between things that are given to us? Can we not suppose that a thing is related to something else, if our idea of that thing justifies such relation, even when the thing is incapable of being presented to us? My heart and my brain are not given to me and yet I can very well suppose that they are related. But it will be argued that we have objective notions of these things and can therefore relate them. Is it then seriously meant that we have no notion whatever of knowledge? If we have no notion of knowledge, we cannot significantly talk about it. It must be granted that we know what knowledge is and can therefore also know its relation to objects.

It may be objected that knowledge is, as we have maintained, different from object, and if knowledge is known, then it becomes indistinguishable from object

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which is also known. We recognise the force of this objection but we must nevertheless point out that although object is known and knowledge is also known, they are not known in the same way; and so a distinction between them is still possible. It is the peculiarity of consciousness that it can turn back upon itself without withdrawing its look from the object. When I know, I may also know that I know. Object is given in consciousness which need not be reflective, i.e. self-conscious. Knowledge is known in reflective consciousness and is known as distinct from the object proper. If knowledge were not known at all, the fact that there is knowledge would go entirely unnoticed and we should not discuss any problem about it.

6. It is argued that the real relation between knowledge and its object, if there be any, must be direct and immediate, because object is directly given in knowledge. But what sort of direct relation is possible between knowledge and its object? The reality of knowledge must be admitted, as it cannot be denied. The object must also be real, if there is to be any real relation between it and knowledge. The only direct relations possible between two real entities seem to be contact (*saṃyoga*) and inherence (*samavaya*). They are obviously not possible between knowledge and its object, and so it seems we have to deny all relations between them.

But from the fact that the direct relations, which hold good between other real things, are not possible between knowledge and its object, it cannot conclusively follow that there is no relation between them. It may only mean that the relation is unique and is not like any other relation.

We thus come to the conclusion that there are no sufficient reasons to deny all relations between knowledge and its object, and so we accept the *prima facie* case we made out at the beginning that knowledge is related to its

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object. We now come to the second question : What is the kind of relation that subsists between knowledge and its object? Is it internal or external? Is it like any other relation or quite unique?

It seems that there are difficulties in the way of regarding it as either external or internal. By an internal relation is generally meant a relation that makes a difference to its terms and an external relation is that which makes no difference to its terms. We can at once see that the knowledge-relation is not internal, for the purpose of knowledge is to reveal its object as it really is and not to change it, and this purpose would be defeated if the relation of knowledge to its object brought about a change in the latter. If the knowledge-relation were merely external, i.e. made no difference to its terms, then an object known would be as good as not known, and there might be knowledge even without its relation to the object which is absurd.

Mr. Ewing discussed at length the internality of the knowledge-relation in two issues of *Mind* 1925 and came to the conclusion that the internality of the knowledge-relation is consistent even with realistic presuppositions. He rightly pointed out the main objections to the view that the cognitive relation is internal. (1) It seems impossible for a present knowledge to change the past or a universal law or a mathematical truth. (2) To say that knowing changes its object seems to imply that knowing is a process of construction exercised upon the object known, and this seems to be incompatible with the nature of knowledge. But he thinks that these difficulties arise only if by 'change' we understand 'cause a change in'. An internal relation no doubt makes a difference to its terms but only in the sense that if either related term were different in a way affecting the relation, the other term would be likewise different. The relation of cause and effect is such

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a relation. A cause cannot be what it is if its effect is different. The effect makes a difference to the cause in this sense, but it does not produce a change in the cause. Similarly knowledge makes a difference to its object. An object cannot be what it is if its knowledge is different. Therefore the cognitive relation is internal.

Now when I have known an object, we cannot possibly suppose that my knowledge could be different from what it is and yet would remain the knowledge of the same object. This fact is probably never sought to be denied by anybody who may be inclined to deny that the cognitive relation is internal. But in my knowledge of a thing there are at least two things involved, (1) the fact of my knowing and (2) what I know of the thing or the content of my knowledge. When one denies the internality of the knowledge-relation, the denial has reference not to the content of knowledge, but to the fact of knowledge. When my knowledge is once there, the content of it cannot be different unless the object known were different. But the fact of my knowledge may not occur at all. If I know, I cannot know differently; but it is not at all necessary that I should know. The content of knowledge is certainly determined by the nature of the object, just as an effect is determined by its cause. But that there should be a subjective consciousness of the object in this or that individual is never determined by the nature and being of any object. The occurrence or non-occurrence of such consciousness is quite immaterial to the being of an object and the knowledge-relation is in the sense quite external.

To say that the knowledge-relation is external is not to say that it comes to the same thing whether we know an object or do not know it. Those who support the doctrine of external relation do not, I suppose, mean to say that there is no difference whatever between related and unrelated terms.

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That would make the doctrine absurd. What they mean or should mean is that when terms enter into any relation they do not become different from what they were outside the relation, except in the newly acquired property of having this relation. This being so, a thing known need not be as good as not known, and so there should be no difficulty in regarding the knowledge-relation as external.

But we cannot bring out the peculiarity of the relation of knowledge to its object by saying that it is external. The relation is quite unique and can be described only as that of having an object (*viṣayitā*). It is not like other relations which hold good only between objects. The fact of knowledge is quite plain and we also clearly see how objects are given in it. The relation of knowledge to object, as it is experienced in knowing anything, and which I have described here as that of having an object (or that of knowledge to object), cannot be made plainer or more intelligible by any elaborate characterisation.

Some people (e.g. Western idealists) try to make our understanding of this relation deeper by suggesting that knowledge and object are not two different things but are only inseparable aspects of one and the same thing, because neither of the terms is available apart from the other. But in fact we are more mystified than enlightened by this description. Our notions of knowledge and object are so very different that we shall always find it very difficult to conceive of a real unity constituted by them. If the unity is not known, its reality, and so the validity of the conception, cannot be asserted. If it is to be known, it must be known subjectively (in reflective introspection) or objectively (in perception). But the alleged whole cannot be known in either way, because subjectively object cannot be known and objectively knowledge cannot be known, and so the whole, constituted by knowledge and object, if there is any, is bound to remain always unknown.

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Some other people (e.g. Advaitists) suggest that inasmuch as when we know an object, our knowledge takes on the form of the object, there is some identity (*tadatmya*) between knowledge and its object; but since there can be no real identity between knowledge and object, we have to take it as illusory (*adhyasika*). But to say there is illusory identity between knowledge and its object is not to say what the real relation is. It is better therefore to remain satisfied with the idea that knowledge is related to its object in a unique way than to imagine some illusory relation between them.

We now come to our last question. Has the object any independent being of its own or is it entirely dependent on knowledge? It seems that the object must be dependent on knowledge for its objectivity, because objectivity is not intelligible apart from knowledge. But objectivity is never the only property of anything in the world. Nothing is ever known merely with the property of objectivity. As Stout says, the being of a thing is never wholly constituted by its being known. We may then suppose that objects depend on knowledge for one of their properties, viz. objectivity. But objectivity is not an intrinsic property of anything in the world. It is a relational property which is acquired when things are brought into relation with knowledge. That it should be and must be known does not follow from the nature of any object, unless it is a subjective state.

Is it possible to decide that objects are independent of knowledge, when we find them only in knowledge and can never ascertain their being apart from knowledge? It is true that we cannot find objects apart from knowledge. But this only proves that finding of objects is not possible apart from knowledge. And however minutely I may examine an object, I can never discover 'finding' as

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constituting any part of the object. Since knowledge forms no part of the object and the character of knowledge is such that it cannot enter into the material constitution of any object, it appears reasonable to suppose that the object owes nothing to knowledge, and therefore will not lose anything when it is not in relation with knowledge, in other words, its being is independent of knowledge.

7

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF PHYSICAL OBJECTS

A CONSIDERATION OF PROFESSOR G. F. STOUT'S VIEWS

By physical objects we understand objects which do not depend for their existence and intrinsic characteristics on the experience of particular individuals. They exist and persist in existence and undergo changes quite independently of the experience which we may or may not have of them. In what way we are or can be initially cognisant of physical objects, as thus understood, is a problem which has, as Mr. Stout says, "troubled philosophers from the time of Descartes to the present day, and none of them can be said to have found a satisfactory solution." Mr. Stout tried in his own way to solve this problem in his Gifford Lectures, and the result of his endeavour has been made available to the public in his recently published book *Mind and Matter*, which is based on his Gifford Lectures. We shall try in this paper to understand the position which Mr. Stout adopts in this work with respect to this matter, and see whether his solution of the problem is quite satisfactory.

According to Mr. Stout we know physical objects through sense-experience and activity-experience. Sensation gives us the material aspect, and activity-experience the dynamic aspect of the physical world. We can study the distinctive contributions of each of these sides of our experience although they are included in actual experience in inseparable unity.

Mr. Stout admits that "Though not the sole factor, sense-experience plays an essential part in our knowledge of physical phenomena." (p. 250). Many essential characteristics of physical objects can be known only

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through sense-experience. "It is only through material characteristics derived from sense-experience that we know bodies as such, and the special differences between one body or state of a body and others." (p. 302).

Now, what do we get in sense-experience? In sense-experience we do not become acquainted with isolated facts having no connexion with one another, but, on the contrary, we get a continuous field in which there are no unsensed gaps between one object and another. Mr. Stout (following Ward) accepts the doctrine of the sensory continuum which "means, in the first place, that at any moment in the course of individual experience all presentations (sensa) are parts of one complex presentation (sensus). No one of them is separated from others 'by something which is not of the nature of presentation, as one island is separated from another by the intervening sea!' (p. 247). It means further that " 'At any given moment' as Ward said 'we have a certain whole of presentations.....; at the next moment we have not an entirely new field, but a partial change within the old!' " (p. 247). There is no abrupt transition from one sensum to a totally different sensum, just as there are no abrupt gaps within one sensum.

But the unity of a sensum does not reflect the unity of physical objects. The screech of an owl and the brightness of the moon can be given in the unity of a complex sensum. But as physical phenomena these two factors are relatively disconnected. The difference between sensa and physical phenomena can be seen in many other ways. We have a bent sensum of a straight stick half-immersed in water. A mountain at a distance looks very much smaller than what it really is. In illusion our sensum is quite different from the physical object which is really there. Of one and the same physical object we have very different sensa when the object is looked at from different angles of vision.

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On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there is a close and intimate connexion between *sensa* and physical phenomena. We know physical objects in terms of *sensa* and unless they were closely connected such knowledge would not be possible. Mr. Stout believes "that there is one way and only one way, in which we can account on the one hand for the apparent disparity between *sensa* and physical phenomena as such, and on the other for their essential and intimate connexion. We must conceive the sensory continua actually experienced by individual minds to be parts of, or partial extracts from, a world-continuum which in the main is not actually experienced by the individual. . . . On this view physical phenomena and the immediate content of sense-experience are continuous in existence and fundamentally akin in their nature." (p. 251). *Sensa* and physical phenomena are different, not because they are different in their nature, but because they are known in different ways. We are directly acquainted with *sensa* in our sense-experience; but physical existence is never actually experienced and so our knowledge of it is always defective. "So far as physical knowledge goes, it is direct knowledge of things as they are in themselves . . . , but their full nature as they are in themselves necessarily escape us just because we are not in the strict sense acquainted with them as we are acquainted with the content of our sense-experience. We have therefore to determine in detail the character of particular objects rather by their relation to each other than by direct inspection of their intrinsic nature." (p. 252). Our knowledge of physical objects is thus not so much about what they are intrinsically in themselves as about how they are related with one another. *Sensa* are of course known as they are intrinsically in themselves.

From the fact that the *sensum* and the physical object are differently known, it follows that the test of truth for

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the one cannot be the same as the test of truth for the other. "For the sensum it is direct scrutiny of the sensum itself. For physical phenomena it is the coherence of perceptual data with each other in a system." (p. 256). In order to be sure as to what it is that we are really sensing in any sense-experience, we have merely to scrutinise attentively the actual sensum given in such experience and the result of such scrutiny is final and cannot be upset by any extraneous evidence. In order to ascertain what really a particular physical object is, which we are knowing in any act of perception, we have to take into our consideration the testimony of different senses and have to see whether the data supplied by the different senses cohere in a system. The evidence of any particular sense is always theoretically capable of being confirmed or upset by the evidence of other senses.

The above gives in brief outline the substance of Mr. Stout's main conclusions. He seems to think that we know physical objects, not *in* sense-experience, but *through* it. We are not acquainted with physical objects in sense-experience but with *sensa* and *sensa* are in his opinion different from physical objects. But if physical objects are not and cannot be given in sense-experience, and thus are not the contents of immediate experience, then the conclusion seems inevitable that we do not know them immediately but mediately or through inference. This conclusion Mr. Stout vigorously denies. He realises full well the difficulty of knowing physical objects at all, if they are not immediately known and so (1) he argues that it is not necessary that what is not present in immediate experience should be known only mediately. When we remember a past fact, we know the fact immediately, although it is not present in actual immediate experience. (2) He further says that the knowledge we get of physical

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objects in sense-experience is of the physical things themselves and not of a third something standing between them and us. He seems to think that the sensible appearance is of the physical thing itself.

As regards (1), we have to say that the analogy between memory-knowledge and knowledge of physical objects does not appear to be quite convincing. In the case of memory we have to deal with a past object which from the nature of the case cannot be given in the present experience, and if we are to know it we must know it as not-given. But in perception we are dealing with a present fact. If we are to know the physical object through sense-experience, we must know it as present; and it is unintelligible how in any experience we can be immediately aware of a present fact without its being given in that experience. In memory-knowledge there is no other object except the fact which is remembered and hence there is no difficulty in knowing it immediately. In sense-knowledge we are confronted primarily and immediately with the sensum which is different from the physical object, and so if the latter is to be known through sense-experience, it appears that it should be known only mediately. With this we pass on to (2) and have to enquire, what is it exactly that we know in sense-experience? If the sensum is a fact of consciousness and if it is different from the physical object, then it appears that the sensum is the only thing we know in sense-experience, and the physical object is not known at all, far less immediately. We are aware of two things in sense-experience, the sensum and the physical object. There is only one object present before consciousness. We have therefore to suppose either that there is no difference between the sensum and the physical object or that we know only one of them, whichever it may be. Mr. Stout keeps the distinction between the

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sensum and the physical object and so he can only suppose that we know only one of them in sense-experience. If we know the sensum, the physical object is not known at all and there is no question of its being known immediately. If we know the physical object, then the sensum ceases to be a fact of experience. Mr. Stout thinks that the sensible appearance (*i.e.* the object known in sense-experience) is not a third something between the knower and the physical object. But if it is not a third something, it should be identified with either of the two. It is not of course the knower; so it can be identified only with the physical object. But when it is so identified what becomes of the distinction between the sensum and the physical object? The theory of the sensory continuum would lead one to suppose that by sense-experience we can never get to anything other than sensa and unless physical objects are identified with sensa they cannot be known at all.

The intimate connexion and difference between sensa and physical objects is supposed to be explained by the hypothesis that the sensory continua experienced by particular individuals are parts of, or partial extracts from, the world-continuum, that sensa and physical objects are continuous in existence and fundamentally akin in their general nature, the difference between them being due to the fact that they are known in different ways.

Now, what exactly is the meaning of the statement that sensa are continuous in existence with physical phenomena? If physical existence is not the existence of sensa and if sensible existence is not the existence of physical phenomena, what justification can we have for asserting that physical phenomena and sensa are continuous in existence and fundamentally akin in their nature? Moreover, in order to know two facts to be

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continuous with each other, we must be able to distinguish between them as well as to note the connexion between them. Both the facts must be equally given. But since in sense-experience we are acquainted with *sensa* alone and do not get the physical objects, we can neither note their connexion nor distinguish between them. Even if we somehow know physical objects in sense-experience, we do not know them as distinguished from and connected with the data of sense.

When the sensory continua are spoken of as parts of the world-continuum, it seems to be meant or at least implied that *sensa* are parts of physical objects. But can we really conceive of *sensa* as parts of physical objects? Mr. Stout would take, I believe, different *sensa* of different people to be separate from one another, having existentially no common parts between them. Now, if *sensa* as such are to be parts of physical objects, they will be different parts with no points of existential community between them. But do we or can we really think of any physical object as constituted of such numerous and superfluous different parts as are referred to it? Do the numerous different but similar *sensa*, experienced by different people, in connexion with, say, a particular table, enter, as existentially different parts, into the constitution of the physical table? The physical table is not certainly conceived as having a number of similar surfaces and numerous legs. Even if we get over this difficulty by supposing that different *sensa*, so far as they are similar, constitute the same part of the physical object, we cannot understand how and in what sense a bent *sensum* can form part of a straight physical object.

Again, if *sensa* and physical phenomena are continuous in existence and akin in nature, what reason is there that we should know them in different ways? If *sensa* are really continuous with physical phenomena, then

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starting with *sensa* we should arrive in the same way of knowing right at the heart of the physical phenomena. We have therefore to suppose either that there is a break or gap between *sensa* and physical phenomena, and so they are not continuous in existence, or that they are known in the same way and so there is no difference between them.

Mr. Stout says that we directly know *sensa* themselves whereas we know physical phenomena in their mutual relations. This is the only difference he has expressly pointed out between them. But a difference in *the way of our knowing* cannot itself constitute a difference between things themselves. If they are to be different it must be due to some difference in their characteristics. But if there is no difference in their nature, we have no ground to distinguish between them and have therefore no reason to believe that they are known in different ways.

Mr. Stout is of the opinion that although we do not directly know the physical phenomena themselves, we know them in their relation with one another. But it does not seem clear how we can know relations of things without knowing the things themselves.

At any rate the hypothesis that the physical objects are not directly known in sense-experience and are known only in terms of their mutual relation seems hardly compatible with the contention that we know physical objects immediately in sense-experience.

It will be apparent from the above discussion that if *sensa* are existentially different from the physical objects, our knowledge of *sensa* will be quite irrelevant to a knowledge of physical objects. And if it is true that *sensa* alone enter into our sense-experience and we have no direct acquaintance with physical objects, then physical objects will be for us absolutely unknown and unknowable.

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We should therefore identify *sensa* with physical objects so that our knowledge of physical objects may be real and not fictitious.

But Mr. Stout as well as many others finds it difficult to identify *sensa* with physical objects, because, it is urged, there are certain obvious differences between *sensa* as actually experienced and physical objects as they exist in themselves. To get rid of this difficulty we must realise that *sensa* as such have no distinct existence apart from the physical objects to which they are referred. They are the sensible characters of physical objects given in sense-experience. The red patch we *sensate* is not something actually existing distinct from the red physical object we know in sense-experience. *Sensa* as such, therefore, are nothing but what we know of physical objects through sense-experience. But since our knowledge is subject to error, *sensa* may not always correspond with the physical objects as they actually exist. That there are cases of error has to be accepted by all theories of knowledge which seek to give a genuine account of human experience. The theory of knowledge which will say that no knowledge is false is as absurd as the theory of knowledge which will say that all knowledge is false. The difference between true knowledge and false knowledge is not a difference between two kinds of knowledge. Knowledge as such is the same in all cases. A false knowledge is also knowledge. So its falsity has to be determined by the character of the object known. Our knowledge is true when the object as known is real and it is false when the object as known has no real being. Our sense-knowledge cannot escape the common fate of all human knowledge. It too is sometimes true and sometimes false. This being so, we can easily see why in some cases the sensible characters given in knowledge cannot be accommodated in the physical

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object to which they are referred. It means that our knowledge of the object as possessing those characters is false and the characters as presented in knowledge are not real at all. It does not mean that all sensible characters as such enjoy independent existence as a separate class of things to be called *sensa*, different from the physical objects, or that they exist as homeless characters. There is only one physical world and such of the physical characters (e.g. shape, colour, etc.) as cannot be accommodated in this world are not real at all.

It cannot be argued that since a *sensum* is actually experienced it must be real, because there is no *a priori* reason why our sense-experience should be credited with infallible validity. In every knowledge there must be an object appropriate to it. Sense-experience being a species of knowledge must always have an object, that is to say. there must be a *sensum* in every act of sense-experience. To experience a *sensum* is merely to know something by way of sense. The fact that we know something by way of sense does not mean that the knowledge must be infallible. If we can grant that our sense-knowledge may sometimes be erroneous, we should have no difficulty in supposing that in some cases the *sensa* are not real at all. If a *sensum* were to be real because it is experienced, an illusory object should also be real because it is seen. Subjective experience as such may not be doubted. But there is nothing in the experience itself to show whether the object experienced is real or not. That has to be found out by some test other than that of mere experiencing.

It is no use arguing that because *sensa* follow some laws of perspective etc. they are not illusory. That they follow certain laws means only that we know the conditions by which illusion may be produced in some cases. But the fact that illusions can deliberately be produced under

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determinate conditons does not prove that what we sense under those conditions is not illusory. That we do not take a straight stick to be really bent even when being half-immersed in water it appears to be bent, only shows that we are not misled by some illusions. But whether we are misled or not, the perception of a stratight stick as bent is certainly illusory, inasmuch as we are presented in it with an object, which, as presented, does not exist.

When we have once realised that some sensa are real and some are not so, we shall have no difficulty in identifying sensa with physical objects. Those sensa which are not in agreement with physical objects are not real at all and those which coincide with physical objects need not be distinguished from them. To experience a particular sensum, as we have said, is to know a physical object with a sensible character. In so far as our knowledge is true, the sensum is wholly one with the physical object. In so far as our knowledge is false, the sensum does not agree with the physical object and to that extent is not real at all. This appears to be the belief of common sense also. When a man affected with jaundice sees yellow colour in the place of white, nobody believes that there is anything really yellow at the place where it is seen by the man, open only to his private inspection.

We therefore come to the conclusion that we directly and immediately know physical objects in sense-experience. Such sensible characters as colour, shape etc., given in sense-experience, are intelligible only as characters of physical objects. When the sensible characters actually experienced cannot be referred to the physical object with which they are associated we have to understand that our knowledge in such experience has failed to achieve its true end, viz., to apprehend the object as it really is, and that the sensa presented are not real at

all. Whether we have a real sensum or an unreal one in any experience cannot be determined from the experience itself. No experience bears on its face the stamp of absolute truth or absolute falsity. We have to determine the truth or falsity of any experience by applying some rational tests. In life coherence among different experiences and successful activity serve as very useful tests. But we can never be absolutely certain. It is only with great effort and caution that we can make ourselves relatively free from the chances of error.

8 CONCEPT AND IMAGINATION IN KNOWLEDGE *

According to some philosophers thought is coextensive with knowledge, and knowledge is inseparable from reality, so that there is nothing outside or beyond thought and knowledge. According to Kant, some of whose ideas we propose to expound in this paper, thought is a particular activity of the mind which functions in other way also than in the way of thought, and knowledge, although in our case, permeated by thought, may yet take place in other possible cases without the support or mediation of thought; and moreover far from covering the whole of reality, knowledge in our case is confined to a limited sphere, the sphere of appearances only. Still to us knowledge is a most important fact and in our life it is a factor of utmost significance.

Kant would not say that knowledge is the most important thing in life, because for him moral practice was of far greater value than theoretical knowledge. I even imagine that his theory of knowledge was framed in the interest of his moral philosophy and is ultimately intelligible only when we regard it in this light. But whatever may be the place of knowledge in the whole system of Kant, it is no doubt true that a major part of his philosophy is concerned with the problem of knowledge and that in the subsequent progress of European thought his contributions to the theory of knowledge have exercised a decisive and determining influence. In fact he has been valued for nothing so much as for his theory of knowledge.

To ordinary thought knowledge presents no problem. We know things and this appears to be an ultimate fact

*In the preparation of this paper the writer has been greatly indebted to Ernst Marcus' *Kant's Weltgabande*

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which has to be assumed in all affairs of our life, theoretical and practical. The very questions how we know and how far we can know have scarcely any significance at the ordinary level of thought at which most of us pass most of our time. It is the great credit of Kant that he made these questions significant for us. To his acute insight knowledge which finds and solves all problems appeared itself as a problem and he offered a solution of it which even Kant regarded as of a revolutionary character.

Let us try to see the problem. By knowledge we understand, to begin with, representation of things standing outside us and quite independent of us. We do not get, however, both representations and things. In actual knowledge the representations are identified with the things. But if the things are outside us, how do they come to be identified with our representations? The things surely do not bodily migrate into our soul to appear as objects of knowledge. If we calmly reflect, we shall find that in knowledge we are wholly concerned with our representations only and have no direct contact with independent things in themselves and that the object of knowledge has to be constituted out of these representations. But to have a representation and to know an object are not one and the same thing. A representation is a passing appearance and an object of knowledge is a standing thing having a definite place in a system of many things constituting what is collectively called nature. So the problem for Kant is to explain how subjective appearances can be constituted into objects of knowledge or objective things.

Common sense takes the world it knows as the world of self-existent independent things. Common sense, of course, does not raise the question how knowledge is possible in such a world, but if it raised the question it

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would not be answered satisfactorily on the basis of its realistic or materialistic presuppositions. Knowledge would be in that view either a miraculous inspiration or a blind faith. No light was to be expected on the problem of knowledge, from a view of things which allied itself with common sense. Kant radically changed the whole outlook when he showed that the apparently independent things of the world, of which we are conscious are no more than mere appearances to us. Out of the material things of the world which have no spark of consciousness in them and are not essentially related with knowledge, it would always be difficult to see how knowledge, which is spiritual in character, can ever arise. But in the view of things as appearances the subjective or spiritual side is already secured (appearance must be to a subject); the only question is to secure objectivity for them, and this should not be very difficult, because to be an object is also to be a particular kind of appearance. We have only to find out what additional characteristics an appearance must possess in order to be regarded as an object of knowledge.

To be merely conscious of an appearance is not to know an object. An object has further determinations that need not be present in an appearance as such. The appearances in so far as they are given—and in knowledge we are concerned with such appearances only—are connected in the last resort with our sense-impressions, and it is a notorious fact that such impressions, or the appearances as given to sense, are all in a state of flux. They pass away as soon as they appear, and if we confine ourselves merely to the actual evidence of sense, we can scarcely be said to recognise them at all. At best they pass like shadows before us as in a dream. In this mass of changing shadows or appearances we cannot discover an object of nature as we know and understand it. These appearances then are not known in any proper sense of the word.

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The fact of knowledge is not denied or doubted. The only question is how to understand or explain this fact, because after a rigorous search of all the resources of consciousness, with a view to discovering the elements of knowledge in them, we come ultimately upon nothing but sensations or sensible appearances and these are not properly objects of knowledge. We wish to get an insight into the wonder-work of our mind which constructs out of these slender materials, the vast edifice of heaven and earth, of nature and history.

We have already seen that sensation and knowledge are quite different. In sensation we get nothing but a passing representation which quickly disappears into nothingness and past, and altogether lacks that character of standing being, of stability and fixity, which characterises an object of knowledge. The sensible representations are given this character by the understanding by means of the concept.

To understand this point we have to realise first of all that no knowledge is ever possible without memory, not even a simple perception. I hear now the five strokes of the bell. I hear the strokes so vividly that I seem to represent them as lying side by side with one another. But as a matter of fact all the five strokes were never present together. The first was no more when the second came into being and all the earlier four were nowhere in reality when the last appeared on the scene. It is because my sense-awareness of the last stroke is aided by my memory of the earlier four strokes that I perceive them all as five. In the perception of a temporal succession the work of memory is quite patent. But it is no less present in the perception of a standing spatial object. For here too we have no standing representation of sense, which we might cognise without the aid of memory. We have really a continuous succession of similar sensations. Neither the

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representations or appearances nor we ourselves are ever standing. The representation or appearance of a standing thing is no doubt there, but it is no standing representation. We live through our experiences and endure in time, and no sense-experience in us is ever standing. When, therefore we seem to be standing face to face with a standing appearance (e.g. of a table), we are really passing through a series of sensations which presents the appearance of a static unity whereas in fact it is a successive multiplicity. We are, then, dealing with a manifold even in our simplest perception and we cannot represent it to ourselves as a unity if we are not aided by memory. All our representations are in time and are spread out, that is, in past, present and future and we cannot reach the past except through memory. It may be taken as a settled fact that no knowledge is possible, whether of a passing or a standing thing, without the contribution of memory.

What exactly is the character of this memory contribution? It is quite clear that our past sense-experience is not bodily brought back to us in memory. We may have another sense-experience exactly like the one we had before, but the past one is past and gone for ever. What is sensibly present is nothing past and therefore no object of memory : and what is past and, therefore, represented through memory, is nothing sensible. We get then by memory a non-sensible representation of a content previously given in sense. When we are thus aided by memory in the perception of an object, the non-sensible memory representations are not held apart in their multiplicity but are combined into a unity which is a representative of the sensible appearances and embodies their significance. We find then we are dealing here with the concept.

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By a concept we understand a non-sensible representation of sensible particulars whose significance is contained in it, so that the concept can be regarded as a representative of them all. Memory is not possible without the concept. Even when memory does not combine the several past representations into a unity, as it does in the ordinary cases of perception, but refers merely to a particular in the past, the concept is found to be necessary; because even there we must have a non-sensible representation of sensible appearance. This is the function of a concept. A concept need not always be a universal or general concept. There are individual concepts as well. When we are dealing with a representation not given in sense and not confined to a particular space and time, we are dealing with a concept. By means of a concept we rise above space and time, and can deal with things far away from us both in time and in space.

It should now be clear that we have no real knowledge in mere sense experience, in which we have relation only to momentary particulars, occupying unique positions in time and space. They no doubt provide materials for our knowledge, but they themselves are not known, because in being known, they would lose their sensible character. Knowledge is an inner spiritual concern in which we rise above space and time, whereas in sense experience we are confined to a particular space and time. Knowledge, properly speaking, consists in an inner representation which is constructed doubtless, on the basis of sense experience, but is not sensible but intellectual in character. This inner representation is called concept. That this is our own construction follows directly from the fact that it is not sensible, because only in sense experience are we dependent on outside gift and are passive, but spontaneous activity characterises all our purely intellectual operations. When the concept is seen to be not sensible at all and

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incapable of being supplied by sense (i.e. from outside source), it is clear that this is constructed by the understanding out of its own resources. (It being assumed that sense and understanding are the only two possible sources of our knowledge). We are bound in sense but free in intellect.

In the concept we have as it were the translation of the sensible into the language of thought or intellect. The representation of sense is different at different times whereas the representation of thought which is called concept has the same content at different times and therefore it accomplishes for us what the sense-representation is incapable of doing. The concept gives fixity and determination to our representations and creates for us what is called fact. As the concept has the same content at different times, we can, in thought, put it in the past, present or the future, according to the requirement of the case. This would be impossible in the case of a sense-content which is available only in the present. We see thus that the concept makes possible both the memory of the past and the expectation of the future. The individual concept gives the unity and significance of a sensible manifold, e.g. a dog, a tree, etc. The individual concepts are further unified into a general concept as that of the class dog. The intellectual character of the concept is best seen in the case of class concepts of which there cannot be any sensuous representation.

We have yet to explain how we are enabled to transform an appearance of sense into an intellectual representation or concept and thus hold it in thought and knowledge. The explanation is supplied by the concept of activity as applied to the self. We have already said that the self is passive in respect of the representations which it receives through sensibility and that it constructs the

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concept through its own activity. We can realise the kind of activity involved in the making of concepts when we consider the effort we have to put forth when we seek to learn something by heart or to impress something on our mind. That we make our concepts by our own activity is clearly seen in errors of memory. If the organism of our knowledge were such as could only take in like a photographic apparatus, what is offered to it from outside, such errors would not be possible. It is because we produce our concepts out of our own activity that they sometimes fail to correspond with the sense-given materials.

We cannot be content merely with the position that the concept is a product of a subjective act; but we must go further and realise that what is represented and made fixed in a concept is also an act of a particular sort. That is, the content of an idea called concept is nothing but the fixed representation of an act. What is represented and made fixed in a concept is a way of acting on the part of the subject. It is comparatively easy to see how this is so in the case of mathematical concepts. The concept of the triangle, for instance, means nothing else than the method or way of drawing a triangle. It fixedly represents an activity in which the mathematician must engage himself in order to produce a triangle.

We can discover similar activity in the framing of the concept of a body. The body, of course, is not a geometrical figure to be drawn on a paper or a board. But it has an outline which can be and is drawn in imagination. The concept of a body represents an act which we must exercise in order to influence our imagination so as to produce for us the image of a body. Even here then we have the idea of a construction, as in geometry, of an act whose effect is a particular image, in this case the image of body. A concept then is the representation of an act, by

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means of which, at the same time, it is made fixed. The sensible representations arise through the modification of sense and are therefore passive, in contrast with them the intellectual representations or concepts are active, i.e. are representations of acts. Conceiving is a way of acting, no doubt subjectively, while sensing is a way of suffering or being acted upon.*

The concept has ultimately reference to sensible representations, which are unified by it, and whose significance is contained in it, so that it may always be used as a substitute for them. Now the question is how the passive representations of sense are transformed into active concepts, how the latter are made to fit the former. In fact we are asking to know what mediates between sense and understanding and brings them together. With this question we are introducing ourselves to an all-important faculty of the mind, which is quite well-known but was not suspected before Kant, to be a factor in knowledge, we mean the faculty of imagination. In the popular mind imagination is associated with poetry and romance never with truth and reality. Kant has shown that imagination is a necessary coefficient of knowledge.

* I have tried in the above account to follow faithfully in the footsteps of Kant and his followers. Exposition, and not criticism, has been my aim. Still I may refer here to a point which is somewhat difficult to grasp. Concepts are used by us to grasp objective facts and so they (concepts) appear to be themselves objective. In the present account they have been explained in terms of subjective acts. This may be intelligible enough from the idealistic standpoint, according to which what ultimately is a subjective act appears also as an objective fact. The categories which are ways of understanding appear also as objective traits. Nevertheless a subjective act is different from an objective appearance. And the difficulty is, if a concept is a way of subjective acting, whether we could have a representation of it at all. It appears that we can represent anything to ourselves only in an objective way, and the concept is still spoken of as a representation.

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Imagination means, to begin with, that active power of the mind by which sensible images are produced. It seems to have two sides, an inside and an outside. On the inside, it is an active subjective power, but on the outside, as presenting images, it belongs, like sensation, to the passive state of the subject. In one respect it is like sensibility, as presenting images, in regard to which the mind is more or less passive, in another respect, as an active productive power it is like the understanding. Imagination thus seems to combine the functions of both sensibility and understanding, and can therefore mediate between them.

Just as an external stimulus brings forth the sensible representation of an object, we have the power, from inside, by an act of the mind, i.e. through imagination, to produce a like picture, because we have the power to exercise a kind of inward stimulation on our sensibility. Imagination is really the power of self-affection. It may be conceived as the faculty of active sensibility.

The part imagination plays in our knowledge can well be seen even in the case of an ordinary perception, e.g. of a house. For the knowledge of a house, we have to depend ultimately on sense experience. But sensations are all successive, and no one of them ever gives the complete picture of a house as we know it. So while we are sensing, our imagination has also to be active, so that out of the many successive sensations a complete picture of the house may be produced. This imaginative act, which, following upon our sensations and in consonance with them, produces the figures of the house before our mind's eyes, is itself the object of a representation, which, when fixed upon is called the concept of the house. This concept enables us to repeat the act and reproduce the figure of the house as also to recognise it. With the help of the

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concept we can guide and control the activity of imagination. Every time we perceive an object, our imagination has to be active, drawing the outline of the thing, and retaining the same when our eyes are turned away. In perception there is also recognition and this is possible only through the concept, which again is nothing but the representation made fixed of an act of imagination.

This imagination is altogether different from the reproductive imagination by means of which we can recall the images of things previously known and perceived. The reproductive imagination comes into play only when there has been some perception already. It succeeds perception. The imagination we are speaking of here is one that precedes all perception or objective knowledge. It underlies knowledge and in a way, constructs or creates its object. Therefore, in contrast with the reproductive imagination, it may be called productive or creative imagination.

The process of imagination and construction of concepts is guided by judgement which sees that there is complete congruence between concept and sensible appearance. This is why the concept can give the significance of the sensible appearance, so that while we read a book or hear a lecture we can gather its meaning without crowding our mind with sensible images. We can conceptually follow the meaning without recalling the sensible appearances.

We thus see that knowing, or acquiring knowledge, means making concepts. We possess real knowledge when we are in possession of fixed concepts which are of our own making. There is no disputing the fact that knowledge after all is an inner representation, a grasping of sensible appearances, which remains when the sensible appearances are gone. It is clear that this grasping of sensible appearances is not itself sensible. This non-

sensuous representation is what we mean by concept. The important point we have to notice here is that a concept is not again a sensible image or picture. It is properly speaking a way of subjective acting by which the image of an object is produced. When we learn anything mentally we accustom ourselves to this kind of subjective acting, rather than impress a ready-made image on our mind.

We have seen that knowledge is not possible without imagination; but we may go further and say that even sensible appearance requires imagination. Sensible appearance no doubt proceeds from sensation. But sensation, properly, is subjective suffering and is not by itself equivalent to an objective appearance. We may be so far unified with our enjoyment of a subjective experience that no objective appearance need result from it. It is by an original imaginative act that we present to ourselves an objective appearance, in response to a subjective experience.

It is no doubt true that these acts of imagination and construction of concepts are not performed consciously by us. We are never directly aware of these acts. We see only their effects and from these we infer the original acts as their productive causes.

We seem to be presented in experience with a completed picture of things, grouped and determined by ready-made ideas. But how do we propose to explain them? The sensationalistic explanation in terms of impressions is hardly adequate at all. Impression is a figurative term which brings to our mind the notion of a soft substance, like wax, that can be modified by the contact of a harder substance with it. When we perceived anything there may be impressions on our body or brain. These materialistic impressions, however, are not themselves ideas in which knowledge consists. We can

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understand impressions on matter, impressions on spirit are hardly intelligible. If knowledge cannot be explained in terms of materialistic impressions, the other alternative is to attempt an explanation in terms of spiritual functions. The element of truth in the theory of impressions, Kant retained in his idea of passive sensation as a factor in knowledge. But we have seen that knowledge does not consist in mere sensation nor can sensation alone supply an adequate explanation of knowledge as we understand it. Knowledge is not passive reception of ideas. Even if it were such we should have to understand what these ideas actually were and whence they came. Ideas never hover about in the air, and they do not enter the mind from outside. And if, also, they are different from passive sensations, they have to be understood as active representations, which, not being available from sensation (and sensation being our only contact with outside reality), are supplied by us from within. If the life of spirit consists in spiritual acts alone, and if the self or spirit is not a store-house of static or atomic ideas then the ideas which the spirit can supply from within itself can be nothing but the ways in which the spirit acts. In themselves, being devoid of all sensible material, they (acts) are of course not perceivable at all but they are necessary to make any perception possible.

9

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

By self-consciousness we ordinarily understand a consciousness in which the subject and object of consciousness are one; it is a knowledge in which the knower knows himself. But how is this possible? It has been said that "To identify I and Me is logically impossible, for, *ex vi termini*, it is to identify subject and object" (Ward, *Psychological Principles*, p. 379). But if it is impossible to identify I with Me, it means that I cannot be known. The answer that "The I is known reflectively in the Me, because the Me has been synthetically constructed by it (much as an artist paints his own portrait by means of a mirror)" (*ibid*, 381) does not very much alter the situation. It is not at all clear why what is synthetically constructed should be a reflection of the constructing subject. Again, if the self (I) is not directly known, the reflection cannot be known as the reflection of the self. The fact that we believe in the existence of the self does not by itself prove that a reflection can be known as the reflection of the self when we have no direct acquaintance with the self. Moreover the reflection of a thing is not the thing itself. We do not, therefore, get a genuine case of self-consciousness when we are conscious of a reflection of the self and not of the self itself. The very same self which is conscious must itself be given in an act of awareness in order to constitute a case of self-consciousness. We do not get a case of self-consciousness, therefore, even when one part of the self is supposed to know another part of it. For the knowing part being different from the part that is known, we find that, in this case the knower (knowing part) is conscious of an other (known part), and not of itself.

But is not the subject in being conscious of itself required to turn itself into an object and thus cease to be a

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subject? Is not the subject, therefore, never to be known in its true character? Is not, again, the distinction between subject and object absolute? It seems to be our experience always that which is known is distinct from that which knows it. If in one and the same act of knowledge the subject could indifferently become either subject or object, and if the same were true also of the object, then when we say 'I know the book,' we might as well say 'The book knows me,' and both the statements should be equally good readings of one and the same fact. This however is never the case. So if self-consciousness is to be regarded as a fact we must be able to show either that what is known in knowledge is not always an object or that there is no absolute opposition between subject and object.

McTaggart seems to think that there is no absolute opposition between subject and object, and holds that the self can become its own object. (Cf. his article on Personality in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*). His argument is that if it were not true that the self can become its own object, no self would know its own existence, since no self can know its existence without being an object of knowledge to itself. And since we know that we exist, it should follow, he thinks, that we can become objects to ourselves. It cannot be denied, he further argues, that there are certain relations in which a substance can stand to itself and there is nothing in the relation of knowledge to justify our supposition that it is not one of such relations. But is it a fact that there is no absolute opposition between subject and object? To be a knower does never appear to be the very same thing as to be known. We have already seen that the subject and the object, in any particular act of knowledge, can never interchange their positions without altering the significance of the situation. The place and the function of the object in any knowledge are never those

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of the subject. And if the situation is to retain the same significance the subject must remain subject and the object, object. If this must be so then we cannot say that on any account the subject itself can be its own object.

Whenever we assert any relation we do so on the supposition of some difference between the terms which are related. Without such a supposition even the relation of identity does not become significant. But even if we admit that the relation of identity does not presuppose any such difference and that it is a relation in which a term stands to itself, we cannot persuade ourselves to believe that the relation of knowledge is a relation of this sort. When I say "I know this" I can never mean that I am identical with "this".

How is it then that the self is aware of its own existence or knows itself? It seems even here we are bound to make a distinction between the self which knows and the self which is known. For epistemology the self as knower cannot be identical with the self as known. But metaphysically, we may suppose, the self is so constituted that it is able to perform the double function of knower and known, in one and the same act of knowledge. If we accept this solution we are not required to do away with the distinction between subject and object which, for epistemology at least, seems to be absolute. When the distinction between subject and object is so clear in every admitted instance of knowledge, we cannot, on the strength of a disputed case, viz., that of self-knowledge, assert that the subject can become its own object. So the majority of those, who believe in self-knowledge, appear to have followed the course we have just indicated.

But if the whole self is the knower, and if again the whole self is to be known, how can we think of the same

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self as knower and known and also keep the distinction between knower and known intact? We have already seen that in self-knowledge that which is known must exactly be the same as that which knows. We require identity as well as difference. Because self-knowledge is a case of knowledge, it is required that knower and known should be different, and because it is self-knowledge it is again necessary that they should be identical. How is this possible?

It is no explanation of the difficulty to suppose that there is metaphysical identity in spite of epistemological difference. When we are moving on the level of knowledge, we do not get at a metaphysical substance which is neither subject nor object. The difficulties of self-knowledge are difficulties of knowledge and should be, and can be solved, if at all, only within their proper sphere. If by self we mean the subject, and if it is intelligible only as subject then in order to vindicate self-knowledge, we must be able to show that the subject itself becomes the object. If this is impossible and if self-knowledge is also a fact, then we must believe that what is given in knowledge need not always be an object.

The point that clearly emerges from our discussion so far is that the subject as subject is never an object. To be a subject is to be a knower and we submit that the knower as knower is never reached as an object. When I know you, I may believe that you have the capacity of knowing, but I can never find you, as an objective content of my knowledge, actually performing the function of knowing. The conscious subject is never got at in the form of an object. When I take you to be conscious subject, I understand you after the analogy of my own self. But you as a subject—actually being conscious of something—do

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not directly enter the field of my consciousness. When you are my object you are simply a factor in my knowledge, and being such a factor, you are never directly seen to initiate or actually perform any function of knowledge. If by object we understand some definite content, held up before our mind, in any concrete act of knowledge, it is easy to see that neither the subject nor knowledge itself is ever an object to us. The pure subject never presents itself before us, far less as a definite content.

If the subject and knowledge are never our objects, how do we know, it may be asked, that there are subjects and knowledge? If I am to know that there is the subject and there is knowledge, is it not necessary that the subject and knowledge should be my objects?

Now if by object we mean anything of which there is any consciousness (not necessarily by an external subject), then of course, we have to say that all things in the world including subject and knowledge are objects. But when its meaning is so widened, will objectivity retain any distinctive character? In any concrete case of knowledge, we have a subject as well as an object together with the fact of knowing. We know what a subject, and what knowledge, are only in the act of knowing. When we know anything we are conscious of the subject and knowledge as well as of the object. So in a sense all these may be said to be objects. But it is a sense which will render objectivity almost meaningless. Even when we say that all these are objects, they cannot be objects in the same sense. The subject is subject-object, knowledge is knowledge-object whereas the object is object-object or mere object. But when we have made a distinction between subject and object and knowledge, we cannot then speak of subject-object and knowledge-object with significance or consistency. If our

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analysis of knowledge into subject, object and knowing is valid then the term object should have a meaning which cannot be shared also by subject and knowing. If all of them could be objects, objectivity would be the only form of knowledge and existence. But this would make objectivity devoid of all real significance. The object is only a factor in knowledge; it cannot absorb in itself the whole being of knowledge, together with that of the subject. Knowledge is not exhausted in the being of the object. When we know, our knowledge is not exclusively confined to the object only. It relates itself to the subject as well as to the object. In any knowledge, besides the object, there is the fact of knowing as well as the subject. All these three factors must be there. The subject is given as subject, knowledge is given as knowledge and all of them need not be given as objects. In knowing anything we are conscious of knowing as knowing as well as of ourselves as conscious subjects. In one and the same act of knowledge, in which something is given to us as the object, our selves as conscious subjects together with the fact of knowledge are revealed in their proper character. We do not need to direct a further act of knowing upon the subject and knowing, in order to know what they are. But they are not given as objects. If they were to be given as objects in order to be known, their true character would never be known.

When I know, I am conscious of the fact of knowing as well as of myself as the conscious subject. But I am conscious of myself as the knowing subject and not as an object. The object of my knowledge in this case is X and not myself. Self-consciousness is not a new species of knowledge in which the subject needs to become the object, but it is an invariable aspect of all knowledge in which the subject remains subject and the object, object.

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Is it not possible, it may be objected, for a being to be conscious without being self-conscious? It is conceded, e. g., by McTaggart, that "the only conscious being of whom I am ever aware is necessarily self-conscious, since it is myself." "But", it is argued, "I am not always self-conscious when I am conscious. Memory gives me positive reason to believe in states when I am not aware of myself at all, in which I am conscious of other objects and not conscious of myself because my attention does not happen to be turned that way" (McTaggart, *ibid*). It is believed that a self could always be self-conscious if consciousness turned its attention to itself. "But this does not", it is maintained, "alter the fact that at those times we are just as really not self-conscious as at other times we are really self-conscious." (*ibid*).

We are however inclined to believe that self-consciousness is inseparably bound up with all consciousness. We cannot say anything about a consciousness with which we are not acquainted; but the consciousness which we find in ourselves seems always to carry self-consciousness with it as an inseparable aspect. We do not propose to deny that we are not always explicitly self-conscious. But it is only a question of emphasis and clearness. To be conscious may not literally mean to be self-conscious. But in fact self-consciousness cannot be divorced from consciousness. It is an aspect of consciousness to which at times pointed attention may not be drawn, but which, all the same, can always be discovered by careful analysis.

If we try to see now whether we can be conscious without being self-conscious, our experiments are bound to end in failure. Actually by observation I cannot find myself to be simply conscious without being self-conscious. The very attempt to see whether I am self-

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conscious at once makes me self-conscious. So we must go to past experience in order to prove that we can be only conscious without being self-conscious. Suppose I remember a state when I was conscious of X and was not conscious of myself. If any one now asks me whether I was conscious of X, I must be able to say that I was. Now, that I was conscious of X is not a case of direct present knowledge but is a case of memory. And what I remember is not simply X or the consciousness of X but the whole fact of myself being conscious of X. But I can remember only that which I knew. So if I am able to remember that I was conscious of X, it is certain that I knew then that I was conscious of X. This shows that I was not merely conscious of X but was conscious also of myself (being conscious of X), i. e., was self-conscious.

Let us even suppose that I positively remember that I was not conscious of myself and that it is a case of true memory. Here on the strength of memory, I am asserting something about myself, not about myself as I am now but about myself as I was at some point of time in the past. But if I had absolutely no experience of myself at that point of time, how can I rationally assert anything about how or what I was at that point of time? If my mind were a perfect blank about myself I should not be able to remember anything about myself. When I remember that I was not conscious of myself, I do not try to hold a blank picture of mere unconsciousness before my mind. But I remember myself as being unconscious of itself. But how can I remember myself being in a particular state, unless myself in that state were originally known to me? By memory we cannot be led back to a conscious state in which we were not conscious of ourselves. It appears impossible therefore that we should be able to establish the separation of consciousness from self-consciousness, either by direct observation or by memory. The fact that we think we are at times not conscious of ourselves, only

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shows that at those moments our minds are much too occupied with object of our knowledge and not that self-consciousness is altogether absent. To be able to say that I am conscious and not to *know* that I am there or *that I am conscious* seems an impossibility.

It may be objected that our whole discussion tends to do away with the obvious distinction between the judgements "I know" and "I know that I know". If the distinction between these two judgments is a valid distinction, then to be conscious cannot mean to be self-conscious. This would also show that there can be knowledge of knowledge.

The judgments 'I know' and 'I know that I know' may appear to be different, but in fact the latter judgment is only an explicit statement of the former. When we say 'I know that I know,' we do not really make an advance in our knowledge from when we simply said 'I know'. It is the same knowledge made more explicit or self-conscious. To say that I know that I know is to use the language of report or external communication. The fact reported is the same fact that is given in the statement 'I know'.

When I say 'I know that I know', by the second 'know' I cannot mean anything different from what is meant by the first 'know'. 'That I know' is only a repetition of 'I know'. For it is impossible that within knowledge, as expressed by the first 'know', another actual process of knowledge (as required by the second 'know') should take place. When I say 'I know' I understand something and when I add further 'that I know', I do not get within the first knowledge and discover another real and new knowledge, but I only repeat myself. It is possible to get the same knowledge twice over, but it is not possible to get knowledge of knowledge or knowledge within knowledge, understanding knowledge in the two places in the same sense.

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When I know anything, I know that I know it. The fact that *I know that I know*, is revealed and involved in the primary fact that I *know*. Self-knowledge is necessary to constitute a complete case of knowledge, but it is not by itself a new case. It is an aspect of knowledge which we may overlook at times but which we can never rationally deny.

We conclude therefore that self-consciousness is a fact but it is a fact which does not involve the necessity of turning the subject into an object. It is an aspect of all human knowledge in which the subject reveals itself as subject.

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It will be generally agreed that the self is a reality which we mean to signify by the word 'I'. The word 'I' stands for the speaker or the knower. When anybody knows or speaks there arises the occasion to use the word 'I', and then also the concept of the self arises. To know the self which is signified by the word 'I' is to know the speaker or the knower as such. Since speaking is a conscious function and is impossible without knowing let us more simply consider merely the knower. To know anything in the capacity of a knower, we must know it as exercising the function of knowing. But the function of knowing and its exercise are not things that can be made clear to us by any description unless we have already had direct experience of them. Where else can we have direct experience of knowing except in our own selves? So the question resolves itself into this : Do I know myself as knower? Can I ever catch myself in the very act of knowing?

Before I deal with, or even try to bring out the inherent difficulties of the position, let me suggest some considerations which seem to show that we certainly know the self as knower. If there is any knowing there must be a knower. A knowledge which is not referred to or owned by anybody is not intelligible to us, just as we do not understand how there can be a colour without there being something which is coloured. So, just as in being acquainted with a colour, we are at the same time acquainted with the thing that is coloured, it seems reasonable to suppose that if we are ever acquainted with knowing, we are thereby made acquainted also with the knower. If we could be acquainted with knowing without a knower, then knowing would stand by itself, which we think to be impossible. Now, we are acquainted with knowing in ourselves and so we must know the self in us

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which is the knower. We cannot argue that we are not acquainted with knowing at all, because in that case we should be unable to speak intelligently about knowing, since it cannot be made intelligible through description, and we should not have that sense of certainty with which we assert any number of propositions involving knowledge. I have absolutely no doubt that I see the pen with which I am writing. Seeing is knowing and of this knowing in the present case, not only is it true that I am the knower, but also that I know myself to be the knower.

When it appears so evident that everybody knows the self, why is it so universally held that self-knowledge is very difficult? And why do some philosophers make it a special point to urge that we try to know the self? The reason seems to be that although we know the self, we do not know all that its nature involves. I may know a physical thing say a pencil without knowing its physical and other properties. Or, as Sankara and Heidegger seem to say, while we have no doubt about the existence of the self, we may be ignorant as to its nature and character. I no doubt know quite truly that I am or that I know various things, but with this undoubted knowledge my ignorance may still be quite enormous as to the limit and extent of my powers for good and evil. I have no idea what villainy or generosity my nature is or is not capable of.

But when philosophers speak of the difficulties of self-knowledge, they mean quite another kind of difficulty, which may be described as logical or epistemological. They start by making a distinction between subject and object, and point out that the subject and the object in any particular case of knowledge are and remain different and distinct. Now in a supposed case of self-knowledge, the knower and the known have to be one. The subject and the object, which in their nature are distinct, have to be

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identified with one another, and this is held to be impossible. Can we get over this difficulty?

It may be supposed that the self is known, but not known as an object, and hence there is no difficulty, because we have not here to identify the subject with the object. But this solution seems to overlook the fact that 'object' is but another name for 'known'. When we call anything an object (in an epistemological context), we merely mean that it is known. If the self is at all known, it is no less an object than my other object in any knowledge whatever. To say that the self is known but not as an object is merely to say that the self is known as not known, which is a contradiction.

We cannot also argue, like Caird, that since an object is known by virtue of its relation with the self, that knowledge is perfect in which the object merges in the self. Self-knowledge thus, according to Caird, instead of presenting us with a contradiction, illustrates knowledge in its perfection. It is of course true that when we know an object it gets related with the self; but we have to note that an essential feature of this relation is the distinction of the object from the self. We have no knowledge without an object, and the object emerges only by being distinguished from the self. This distinction is essential to knowledge and when it lapses, far from getting knowledge in its perfection, we get no knowledge at all.

One should however admit that our relation with our own self is different from our relation with any other thing, and so the way we know other things need not be the way in which we know the self. It is more plausible to suppose that self-knowledge is a fact and the distinction between subject and object, which holds good everywhere else does not hold good here than to suppose that the distinction is universal and the self is not known at all.

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And so if one holds self-knowledge to be a fact and denies that what is known must in every case be different from the knower, I do not know what I can urge against him to prove him false. But perhaps this is not the only way to defend self-knowledge.

One may retain the distinction between knower and known and still hold that self-knowledge is possible. When it is held that knower and known are distinct it is not meant that what is once known can never become a knower or that what is a knower in one case cannot be known at all. What is really meant is that what is known in a particular case does not exercise the function of knowing in that very case. For aught we know the knower and the known may interchange their functions in a different case. If this is so, then that which is the knower in one case can very well be known in another. But our problem is not merely to know some entity which performs the function of knowing in some case or other, but to know the entity called self, at the time when it is actually knowing remembering that one and the same act of knowing cannot be both directed by and upon the same thing. Now if we can have two acts of knowledge, one closely following upon the other, before it is lost and actually past, then virtually we shall have two acts of knowledge at the same time, and the knower in one act may, as knower, be easily known in the other. Is such a thing possible? There are three points to be decided here, (1) whether one can perform two acts of knowledge at the same time, (2) whether the first act is not already past before the second act takes place, and (3) whether we can identify the subject in the one act with the subject in the other.

(1) It does not seem at all very difficult to attend to more than one thing at a time. Psychologists speak of distribution of attention, and are agreed, I believe, that we

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can attend to several things at the same time. While I am listening to a sound, I may at the same time take note of a colour. You cannot suppose that my mind turns back and forth from one thing to the other, when I am not at all conscious of any such transition.

(2) All our psychical states seem to have some duration; at least they are not quite instantaneous in a literal sense. It is not the case that a mental state shoots up suddenly and is again lost in an instant. Every such states seems to last for a time, so that while it lasts another state may very well arise. We should remember two things; first, our conscious mental life is not made up of discrete points called states, which know nothing of one another, but is a continuity in which one state is available for the next for observation and knowledge; secondly, our mental life does not run in a linear fashion, but seems to have a volume about it. It is not a fact that only one state can occur at one time; but the fact seems to be that several states, not incompatible with one another can occur at the same time. If you like to call all these together one mental state, you have to admit several different aspects in it. While I am enjoying a good taste, I may at the same time desire to continue the state, and also cognise that I am so enjoying. Thus we find that an act of knowledge need not be wholly past while another arises. In fact although successive, they may co-exist for a time.

(3) There is some difficulty in identifying the two subjects, if we define them by their respective knowledge. If the acts are different, then the subjects, as determined by them, should be also different. But as a matter of fact, it may be one and the same entity which is the subject in both these acts. The question how it is the same self which is the knower in one act and known in another is really the question of the identity of self in different acts and states, and has to be solved in the same way as the latter.

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But although self-knowledge may be defended in the way just indicated, it does not appear to be a fact that we have two separate and distinct acts of knowledge, one supervening upon the other, whenever we have a case of self-knowledge. It seems possible that I may be aware of myself as knower in the very act of knowing, in which I know some object other than myself. When I see the table, I may be well aware that I am seeing the table, without having a separate act of knowledge directed upon myself. How is this possible? *Prima facie* the fact of my seeing the table and the fact of my being aware of my seeing the table appear different facts, requiring two distinct acts of knowledge. But really the latter is not a separate act at all. When I see the table I am of course conscious of the table, but this consciousness of the table is not a floating something, which may be indifferently owned by me or by you or by none at all. It is always mine or yours or somebody else's. It seems certain that I cannot be conscious of the table without appropriating the consciousness to myself, without, that is, realising that it is I who am being conscious. Thus it comes about that whenever I know an object, I know at the same time that it is I who am knowing. This is corroborated by the fact that if I am asked, even when I am absorbed in an objective contemplation of a thing, whether I am conscious of it or not, I am able to answer 'Yes' without the least hesitation, and without looking for any new evidence.

All the evidence necessary for my answer lies within my consciousness of the object.

If this is so, it may be asked how is it then that when I know an object, I do not at the same time realise that I am knowing the object? The simple explanation seems to be that we are dominated by objective interests, and our attention is fixed upon the object and is not directed to the

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subject. Although no special attention is paid to the self as knower, it is not thereby thrown out of consciousness, because many more things than what we attend to are always within our consciousness. Thus it comes about that though when I know an object, I am conscious at the same time that I know the object, I do not afterwards remember to have had the latter consciousness, because no attention was paid to it, and our memory is clearly conditioned by attention.

When we know an object, of which there can be a sense intuition, we may call it primary knowledge or knowledge of the first degree. When I see a table, I have knowledge of this kind. The term 'knowledge' is mainly understood in this sense, and the term 'object' also is generally understood in reference to this kind of knowledge. The object in this sense is mostly external to the body and cannot be identified with the subject which knows it. My awareness of the fact of my seeing the table may be called secondary knowledge or knowledge of the second degree. It is evident that the knowledge of the second degree cannot occur by itself and independently. It is wholly dependent for its occurrence upon the knowledge of the first degree, although it is only through the knowledge of the second degree that we can at all be aware that there is such a thing as knowledge. The knowledge of the second degree is not a separate act exercised by a subject upon an object, distinct from itself; it is just the self-manifestation or self-completion of the knowledge of the first degree, and in this kind of knowledge, which we have called secondary, there is no opposition between subject and object, and so there is no question of turning the subject into the object. They remain what they are in the primary or basic knowledge, and are merely realised in their proper character. When knowledge or, more strictly, the knowledge of the first degree takes place, we cannot say

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that it merely reveals the object but remains itself in obscurity. The fact seems to be that it reveals the object and also reveals itself. If we think that we are not aware of its self-revelation at the time, it only means that our attention is not turned in this direction. When our attention is turned this way, we do not discover a new fact, but only realise what is already involved in our primary act of knowledge.

One result of our discussion is that the self cannot be known merely by itself. The self can be known, if at all, only in its conscious functions, and a conscious function is always an objective function, i. e. refers to an object. The self must know, feel or will an object in a primary act of knowledge, so that it can be known in a knowledge of the second degree. It is impossible to find the self doing nothing, having no conscious relation with any object.

11

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'The world is false.' This astounding statement is made by advaitism in all seriousness, and some very sensible people seem to believe it quite honestly. Before one can accept the statement as true or reject it as false, it is necessary that one should understand its proper meaning. We can neither believe nor disbelieve a statement truly without understanding beforehand what it really means. The present statement is so comprehensive in its scope and so far-reaching in its intent that our first attempts at understanding its meaning seem to end in failure.

Let us first of all try to understand what the term 'the world' stands for, what it is exactly that is roundly said to be false. The world does not mean merely the external visible world with its sensible qualities. It means this and more than this. Our bodies are also included in the world and our mental states too are not excluded from it. In fact whatever can be presented to us either externally or internally to the mind or the senses, forms part of the world which as a whole as well as every item in it is said to be false. Falsity is thus asserted of everything that we can sense or feel, think of or imagine as an object.

One way of understanding a theory or a belief is to see how one is led to it from the facts of common experience. Now, illusion is a familiar fact of common experience and in this experience we become acquainted with a falsity which we certainly associate with a visible appearance. May we not pass quite easily from this notion of falsity connected with some appearances to the notion of the falsity of all appearances, seeing that there is nothing to distinguish one appearance as appearance from another? Such passage, however, far from being easy does

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not even seem possible, because in the first place, the cases of recognised illusion are not so plentiful in life as to give us the impression that everything is illusory, and, secondly, it is not true that we cannot and do not distinguish between one appearance and another. The discredited appearance of a snake in the place of a rope is certainly not put on a par with the appearance which we take to be a rope. Apart from some religious or mystical interest, it does not seem possible on the basis of common experience, on the basis, that is, of the sporadic cases of recognised illusion which we meet with in life, to arrive at the notion that the whole world is false.

But although psychologically we may not be able to trace the origin of a theory or a belief in our common everyday experience, we may still see the logical grounds which go to support it, and that would also be a way, and a better way, of understanding it. Tracing the origin of a belief or a theory would decide nothing as to its validity or invalidity, whereas the logical grounds in support of it, if we can see them would at once win for it at least our intellectual assent. Now what can be the logical ground of the statement that the world is false? The ground that is generally assigned is that the world is an appearance. But why should an appearance, because it is an appearance, be false? The answer we get is that we know cases of appearance which are clearly false, such as that of silver in place of a piece of shell or that of a snake in place of a rope, and there is no difference of kind or character between such appearances and the world as a whole. All are appearances and since appearances are known to be false, everything that is an appearance must be false.

We must confess that this argument, so far as it is an argument, is highly unconvincing. We are even persuaded that it is quite fallacious. Put in the logical form, the

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argument simply amounts to saying 'Because some appearances are false, and the world is an appearance, therefore it is false.' This argument clearly involves the fallacy of undistributed middle. It says, in short, 'because some appearances are false, therefore all appearances are false.' There is no logical connection here between the premise and the conclusion in the sense that from the truth of the premise 'some appearances are false' nothing can be inferred as to the truth or falsity of the conclusion ('all appearances are false'). When we recognise some appearances as false, we certainly observe a distinction between these appearances and others that are not recognised as false. This distinction between a false appearance and a true one, between a false snake and a true rope, is entirely denied in the conclusion which says all appearances are false. Can we regard an argument as valid in any sense which denies in the conclusion what is implied in the premise?

We cannot suppose that the connection between falsity and appearance is analytical, that is, the idea of falsity is involved in the idea of appearance. If such were the case, nobody would need to point to certain special cases of appearance (rope-snake etc.) in order to persuade us that all appearance is false; in recognising anything as appearance we should recognise it as false. We know this is not the case. When you say that you cannot distinguish one appearance as appearance from another, this only means that the ground of falsity of an appearance does not lie in its character as an appearance but in something else. An appearance as such is neither true nor false. It is condemned as false only when it cannot stand light or examination. We judge it to be true or false only in consideration of certain other characteristics than that of being an appearance merely.

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Moreover, the falsity of an illusory appearance is not arrived at by means of an argument. Its falsity lies in its disappearing of itself from the place of its appearance. But the world is a standing appearance. It shows no tendency to disappear from the field of our view. The world therefore is not certainly false in the sense in which the illusory snake is false. Thus it appears that there is no logical ground for the statement that the world is false.

We have so far assumed that the statement as a whole as well as each of its terms has an intelligible meaning, even though we have failed to find any rational basis for it, whether psychological or logical. But if we examine carefully we shall find that what is asserted in the statement (viz. the falsity of the world) has no intelligible meaning. The notion of falsity is significant only within the world in regard to some particular item in it which is superseded by another. The notion has no intelligible sense when we take it out of its proper sphere and apply it to the world as a whole. It is the rope that makes the snake false. What is it that can possibly make the world false? There is nothing. You cannot say that it is the Brahman which makes the world false because the Brahman is never put in the place of the world, the Brahman is never seen or conceived objectively. When we say that the snake is false, we mean that there was no snake at all in the place where it appeared to be but something else, viz. a rope. The idea of falsity is mainly a negative idea, with a positive basis, which gives it its significance. Everything that is recognised as false must have this positive basis. Even a hallucination is not possible without a background or surrounding. In the case of the illusory snake which is false the positive basis is supplied by the rope in the place of which it was seen or by the ground to which it was referred. But when we are called upon to think of the world as false, our mind gets no positive basis to support this absolute negation which

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therefore remains utterly non-significant. Really speaking such a proposition is literally unthinkable. The world which is declared to be false is not merely the world of physical existence. But whatever can be thought of as an objective content is included in the world, so that to say that the world is false is to say that there is really no objective content. But can we exactly think of or conceive a situation in which there is no objective content? All thinking is objective thinking and no thought is possible without some objective content. Therefore to say that the world is false is to deny all thought and the denial of all thought can be no proper thought at all. It is like saying that my mother is childless or that I am quite dumb. Thus we find that the proposition that the world is false is not literally intelligible, because it involves self-contradiction and cannot be thought; because what it asserts has no proper significance, and lastly because, even assuming that it has a sense, we can find no rational basis for it.

But still we cannot help supposing that there must be some good sense in this apparently nonsensical (in the modern positivistic sense) proposition, otherwise so many sensible people could never believe in its truth. Let us try to find out if this statement can be made to yield any intelligible sense.

1. To be able successfully to bring out the meaning of this proposition we must realise first of all that when any thing is declared to be false by the advaitist he does not mean that the thing in question is absolutely nothing. Even an illusory appearance is not for him the manifestation of an unreal thing (*asat-khyāti*). That which is an absolute nought has not the capacity to show itself forth. A hare's horn or a flower in the sky is never seen. An illusory appearance then for the advaitist is something that cannot be described either as real or as unreal. By real he means real as the unchanging eternal Brahman is

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real and by unreal he means something that is never an object of apprehension, as for instance, the horn of a hare. When the world is declared to be false, we must understand it to be indescribable (*anirvacaniya*) in this particular sense. It is neither real like the Brahman nor unreal like a hare's horn. In this sense the falsity of the world is quite an intelligible notion. The world is not simply and totally denied. It is merely described in terms of its difference from absolute reality and absolute unreality, and this description does not contain any unintelligible concept. In this view the world seems to enjoy a sort of reality. But will it not militate against the monistic character of the advaitic reality if we grant some kind of reality to the world? The advaitist does not think so, because the reality which the world enjoys is not of the same grade as that of the Brahman. The unity of the Brahman would have been affected if the world were real in the sense in which the Brahman is real. But it is not so. Just as the rope which underlies the appearance of a snake is not affected by the apparent snake, so is the Brahman quite unaffected by the world. This, I suppose is the easiest way of understanding the so-called falsity of the world.

2. In another way we may try to make the concept of the falsity of the world intelligible. To say that the world is false is to say that it has been judged by a standard and has been found wanting. Self-subsistence or independence is a fairly good criterion of reality. If a thing depends on something else for its existence then it is not real in itself. We may well conceive that the whole world is sustained by a unitary principle, so that every item in it as well as the whole is maintained in being only by the sustaining power of this principle. In such a case the world may be said to be false as enjoying only dependent existence; it is false as any abstraction is false. Even Whitehead says that the world which is studied by science is an abstraction

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as it is conceived apart from the subjective relation in which it is actually given. The world conceived in dissociation from the subjective relation or apart from God or the Brahman is false in a quite intelligible sense. This does not mean that the world is nothing even when we grant its dependence on God or the Brahman. To be dependent, it must be something. If it were nothing, there could be no question of its dependence or independence. The world is not a baseless show; it has a very good basis in the Brahman.

3. From this we may easily pass on to the view that the world is a mere appearance which is another intelligible meaning of the assertion that the world is false. To arrive at this view we are considerably helped by the instance of an illusory object. From such instances we learn that when we apprehend an appearance we do not and cannot apprehend by the same act the physical or empirical existence of the thing which appears. Even contemporary philosophy in the West makes it abundantly clear that when a *sensum* is given, the corresponding physical reality is not given in the same way. While the *sensum* is known, the physical or spatio-temporal reality is constructed, believed or merely accepted as real. This construction, belief or acceptance is different from knowledge. From the point of view of knowledge, then, the world is a mere appearance. In itself it is neither real nor unreal and is not given as either in direct awareness. We attribute reality or unreality to it from our practical points of view. But apart from this attribution, belief or assertion, the world is neither real nor unreal. This is its falsity which is different from utter negation. This is an intelligible view of the falsity of the world. Merely by philosophising we cannot reduce the world any further. Philosophy cannot reduce the presentation of the world to utter nought which is the ideal of advaitic spiritual discipline. But at the level of philosophy this ideal is scarcely intelligible.

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4. Although the three different ways in which I have tried to make the notion of the falsity of the world intelligible are not, I believe, without some support in authoritative texts, they do not bring out, in my opinion, the most important point in the whole notion. If the recognition of the falsity of the world does not at all affect my beliefs and practices of daily life, I have not certainly grasped all that the advaitic teachers seek to convey when they condemn the world as false. It seems perfectly possible for me to retain all my empirical beliefs and carry on my worldly practices in the same passionate way as before, even when I recognise quite clearly that the reality of the world is different in kind from that of the Brahman, that the world depends for its existence on some unitary principle and is a mere appearance from the point of view of direct awareness. To say that the world is merely an appearance for direct knowledge is not to support or oppose any of our empirical beliefs which may remain just as they are. I can hardly suppose that advaitism, which proposes to transform all our valuations of things and revolutionise our whole outlook on life and the world can be content with such a position.

We have said that the world is an appearance from the point of view of direct awareness. But that is an ideal or abstract point of view. We are no mere ghostly spectators without any personal interests of our own. Our knowledge is guided and collected by our interests and the object of our actual knowledge is never a mere appearance but always something or other with causal efficiency. The point of view of mere apprehension is impossible of realisation for us so long as we are in the body. We are thoroughly identified with our bodies and through them are connected in an intimate manner with the rest of the physical world, so that the object of knowledge always affect us in a favourable or unfavourable

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way. When I see my body approached by a snake, I do not merely take note of the approach of one appearance by another, myself, their spectator, remaining quite unaffected. No, I am thrown into a great agitation of mind and body and even run for my life. Thus the world which I actually know is intimately connected with me and every object of my knowledge reacts favourably or unfavourably on my will and feeling. That is, the objects of my knowledge are objects of my interest and I am bound to recognise as real what touches my interest. It would be sheer mockery and a sad travesty of the advaitic position if I were to say that the world is false when all my interests in the world remained quite intact. The reality for me (though not in itself) is defined by my interests and so long as I retain the least interest in the things of the world I cannot truly and honestly say that the world is false. Because our present interests are mainly about the body, about food and raiment, therefore the physical reality or matter is the highest reality for us. We are all materialists in this sense. We must get rid of this materialism if we are to achieve any true understanding of the advaitic position.

The first requisite condition for being eligible (*adhikāri*) for a study of the advaitic philosophy as any authority on the subject would tell us, is the state of utter detachment (*vairāgya*) in regard to all worldly things. We are born with many wordly interests, and we can understand and appreciate the advaitic position, that is, realise the falsity of the world, only to the extent we are able to extricate ourselves from the grip of these interests. The falsity of the world then means, to begin with, its utter unimportance or irrelevance for spiritual interests. To recognise the falsity of the world is not merely to correct a theoretical error of judgement which takes place only on the intellectual plane, but really to rectify a fundamental spiritual defect of our nature which colours our whole life

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and thought. Thus it is clear that to realise this kind of falsity merely theoretical argument provided by philosophy is not enough. We must practically raise ourselves to a level of spiritual intensity in which material interests have no appeal whatsoever. Then and then only can we realise what it really means to say that the world is false. What we mean is that one must get rid of one's worldly interests in order to realise the falsity of the world. But getting rid of worldly interests is a practical proposition, not a theoretical problem to be solved by logical arguments. It involves a turning of the whole direction of our willing and feeling which is different from correcting an intellectual error. True the recognition of falsity is ultimately a cognitive act, but this is preceded and conditioned by a discipline of the mind which involves the purification of our will and feeling.

The real problem is to get rid of our worldly interests. And this cannot be brought about merely by wishing. We cannot give up all interests at once. To give up all interests is hardly compatible with life itself. We can however lessen our worldly interests by cultivating certain other-worldly or spiritual interests. Our worldly interests diminish with the increase of our spiritual interests and vice versa. Through art, morality and religion we may achieve a chastening of the mind which will enable us to see more reality in spiritual things than in physical matter.

For the artist beauty of form is certainly a greater reality than the matter which embodies that form. Whatever importance the matter has for the artist, it derives it from the circumstance that it can be made to represent a particular beautiful form. For ordinary people form or beauty is adjectival, whereas the matter, in which the form is embodied is substantive. To the artist with his mind concentrated on the contemplation of the form it is the matter that takes a secondary place and may be considered adjectival. To him the form is the reality or substance while the matter is an accident.

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In moral life we clearly recognise a reality which may not and indeed does not have a material being. In leading a moral life we pledge our unswerving loyalty to an ideal, to an ought, which is nowhere seen on earth, on sea or land. Although it has no material embodiment, it enables us to defy all earthly powers.

Religion expressly draws our mind away from all visible things to an invisible reality. Our spiritual nature certainly gains in strength through these activities of art, morality and religion. As our spiritual life deepens and we are more and more imbued with a lively feeling for things invisible and divine, the sense of reality which is now associated with the physical world and which is so oppressive begins to wear quite thin, till the whole visible world becomes a shadowy appearance, and may at last, even fade out of sight.

The falsity of the world then, according to the advaitists, as far as I understand them, is not a mere theoretical idea but a concept of spiritual valuation which can be realised in its full significance only as a result of spiritual discipline. When I do not believe in the falsity of the world, it is not because my understanding is dull, and I cannot follow your philosophic argument, but because I lack the requisite spiritual culture, or outlook. I can however, well imagine a level of spiritual exaltation from which the whole material world may be realised not only as a thing of no importance but as altogether lost to spiritual sight.

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SHANKARA AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER, PHILOSOPHER AND MYSTIC

Shankaracharya, as Shankara is generally called in India, meaning the great teacher Shankara, is universally recognised as a great philosopher. Many Indians regard him as the greatest philosopher that India has ever produced. But such is the general lack of historical knowledge and interest in India that we do not know when exactly this great philosopher lived. We know that he was born in the South, in the present State of Kerala, but there is uncertainty about his date. Many Indians place him in the remote past, whereas European scholars give him a much later date. But I believe it is nowadays generally agreed among competent scholars, both Indian and European, that he flourished towards the end of the 8th century and lived most probably from 788 to 820. It is noteworthy that these scholars do not dispute the traditional belief that his earthly career did not extend beyond the brief period of 32 years. And it is really surprising how he could accomplish so much within such a short period. His works, as they were published many years ago, in a standard edition, consisted of twenty odd volumes. And he was not merely an author, writing serious commentaries and other philosophical treatises in prose and verse; he travelled a good deal throughout this vast country, when there was no easy means of travel available, and engaged himself in serious disputations with philosophical opponents. He founded four *mathas*—residential establishments—for the holy men of his order, in four different corners of the country which are still in existence. Besides, being an orthodox religious man, he must have given much time to religious practices, including study and meditation. When we consider his many-sided

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activities and the works he accomplished in his short life, we are really struck with wonder. And it is not surprising that he was credited with super-human powers.

He hardly lived any secular life. He was initiated into a life of renunciation and self-denial (*sannyasa*) very early at a tender age and led the life of a holy mendicant. He was a homeless wanderer all through his life, travelling throughout the country, defending Vedic religion against all heretics and critics and calling men to a life of renunciation and earnest endeavour, to achieve salvation through knowledge. His many poems, composed in praise of various deities, give expression to his innate piety and religious fervour. Thus he came to be regarded as a great saint and won the unfeigned veneration of his disciples and others.

His writing is at once profound and clear and his poetical compositions give ample evidence of his poetic gifts. We are not concerned here, however, with his literary achievements, but with his philosophical ideas.

His name is closely associated with (1) Advaitism and (2) Mayavada : that is, with the view that (1) Brahman or the absolute alone is real, which suffers no dualism or difference; and consequently (2) all else, the world of dualism and difference, is an illusory appearance. The world is declared to be as unsubstantial as a dream or any object of common illusion.

It would however be a mistake to suppose that Shankara was the first to propound these views and was thus the founder of a new school of Vedantism. It is well known that he never claimed to have given an altogether new view, but he always insisted that he was expounding the truly Vedantic view which was already embodied in the Upanishads. It is true that there are other commentators of the Upanishads who do not follow Shankara's interpretations, and it may be supposed that Shankara

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formulated a new theory of reality and tried to substantiate it with suitable quotations from the Upanishads, and then he tried to interpret the principal Upanishads in the light of his theory. But we should not forget, he also refers to a longstanding tradition in support of his view, and refers to those who supported his view as persons acquainted with the traditional view (*sampradaya*vid). This shows clearly that Shankara had no doubt in his mind that he came in the line of a respectable tradition and could not be accused of new-fangled ideas. At least we know definitely that Gaudapada, who was older than Shankara and was in fact the teacher of Shankara's teacher Govinda, upheld the theory of Advaitism and also referred to the world-illusion as due to *Maya*. I am, therefore, led to believe that both Advaitism and the doctrine of *Maya* were already there and people were not ignorant about them. Still it cannot be denied that Shankara is the most important representative of the Advaitic view (which of course involves the theory of *Maya*).

What goes to the credit of Shankara is that his interpretation of the Upanishads can accommodate the theistic and dualistic views of other interpreters, while their interpretations cannot provide for the non-dualistic view of Shankara ; and it cannot be denied that there are traces of both non-dualistic absolutism and dualistic theism in the Upanishads. Shankara provides for the reconciliation of dualistic theism with non-dualistic absolutism by giving us a two-fold conception of the Absolute, both as devoid of attributes and as endowed with attributes. He does not, however, place these two conceptions on a par with one another. He regards one of them as higher and the other as lower. The Absolute in itself is of course devoid of all attributes and free from all distinctions, either within itself or in respect of outside things, there being nothing in reality besides Brahman. This is the higher or the true view of Brahman.

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However, we cannot ignore a lower view which, too, is about Brahman, but as veiled by ignorance. So long as we believe in our embodied existence and life in the world, we cannot rise to the true conception of reality. So we misconceive the Absolute as God who has created the world which includes our bodies with which we are identified. As long as we believe in the world in which we live and move and have our being, and which is not self-subsistent or self-caused, we cannot help believing in some supreme being, who has brought the world (along with ourselves) into existence and sustains it in perfect order. This supreme being is God, the absolute for our common understanding.

But of course this is not the true view of reality or Brahman, which is absolutely alone and without a second and consists of pure consciousness. This is unmistakably declared in the Upanishads which describe Brahman as Truth, Knowledge and Infinite (*saytam, jnanam, anatham*) and as quite alone without a second (*ekamevadwitiyam*).

An orthodox Hindu, having absolute faith in the Vedas, cannot possibly disbelieve what the Upanishads say. But how is he to account for the world which he clearly sees before him and around him, of which he is a part and which he takes to be real? The only way in which he can reconcile his perception with his faith is by supposing that his perception is wrong, as we often actually find perceptions going wrong.

His faith in the scriptural declaration is fortified by various considerations. There is nothing to show that the Vedic seers could have any motive to delude the world and had said things which they had not known to be true. Many generations of men have believed in them, not without a cause, and people are encouraged to believe in their truth by the uncontradicted testimony of many saints

and sages who had realised it. Thus a Hindu comes to believe that he too can realise the truth and get rid of his present misconception of reality by following some well-known course of spiritual discipline in the path of self-realisation. In the meantime, he follows the ordinary course of religious practices enjoined in the scripture to purify his mind and make it fit for the perception of truth in due course of spiritual maturity. He keeps on his belief in the ultimate reality of the non-dual Absolute and consequently in the illusoriness of the world of distinction and difference he sees around him.

We have already said that Shankara never claimed to have given an original view of reality of his own. He clearly implies that he is merely expounding the view of truth embodied in the Upanishads. Thus the Upanishads are the ultimate source of his inspiration and the guarantee of the truth he proclaims. But in upholding the Upanishadic view of truth and reality, he was, no doubt, aided by his profound reflections and self-analysis as well as by certain logical assumptions which are not commonly disputable. By a sort of transcendental reflection and an analysis of self-consciousness, he is able to bring home to us the notion of the pure subject, which is nothing but pure consciousness.

In our self-consciousness, we realise the self as subject. Primarily and ultimately, the self comes to us as the subject of all our experience. The self is never found in any objective appearance, from which we always distinguish ourselves. Shankara emphasises the utter distinction of the self as subject from all objects. The distinction between subject and object as well as their opposition to each other is absolute for him, so much so that he conceives the opposition between them as that between light and darkness. The comparison is not altogether fanciful, because the subject is the only thing

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that is self-manifest and requires nothing else to show it forth, whereas an object is always dependent on some subject to reveal its being. If we are to appreciate the Advaitic position properly, we must fasten upon the utter distinction between the subject and the object and make the subject altogether free from the least taint of objectivity. We must realise that whatever can be distinguished as object is *eo ipso* distinct from the subject and is not the self.

It is easy to grant that objects like chairs and tables are not myself. There is some difficulty in realising that our body is no part of our self, because we feel so closely identified with our bodies. But we shall be asked whether we can objectify our body and there is no doubt that we are clearly conscious of our bodies as objects. And if the body is an object, then it follows from the utter distinction between the subject and the object, which Shankara never doubts, that the body is not the self. Moreover, it is easy for an orthodox Hindu to believe that the body is not the self, because according to his traditional beliefs the soul certainly survives bodily death and is supposed to exist when the body is not there.

The self cannot also be identified with the senses, not only because the senses form part of the body, but also because with the loss of any of the senses, e.g., the eye or the ear, we feel no change whatever in our sense of the self. The self cannot be equated even with the mind, even though we feel so intimately identified with it. The self is not the mind because the different states and modification of the mind are objects of our consciousness, since we become clearly aware of them as of any other objects. We are aware of our happy or anxious mind. Anxiety and happiness as well as desire or determination are states of the mind, and so, even if the mind and its states are subjective in some sense, they must be

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distinguished from the pure subject or consciousness to which these are given as objects.

Shankara, however, does not deny the empirical fact that we feel ourselves identified with our body and the mind, and regard ourselves as dark or fair, dull or intelligent. But he is not ready to grant that the self is, in a way, indetical with the body and the mind as well as different from them. He does not understand, at least cannot accept, what is sometimes called identity-in-difference, because the very concept of identity-in-difference militates against his logic of pure identity and is condemned by him as confused and self-contradictory. He understands identity which is pure and simple, and the only judgment which is absolutely clear to him is 'A is A'. To suppose that the self is one with the body or the mind is to contradict his primary premise or assumption, which is self-evident to him, that the subject is utterly distinct from the object. In the light of this assumption and his logic of simple identity, he is compelled to regard the empirical fact of our identification with the body and the mind as born of some innate mistake or transcendental illusion.

Shankara recognises that our whole empirical life, whether of knowledge or action, depends on our identification with our bodies. But he regards this identification as illusory and finds that this fundamental illusion underlies all our activities, theoretical or practical, religious or secular. This he has brought out very clearly in his masterly introduction to his commentary on the Vedanta-sutras. He has to regard the entire visible world, with which both science and history are concerned, and which provides the theatre for all our activities and which we believe to be there from the beginning of time and running to an indefinite future, as altogether illusory, because it comes in conflict with the scriptural declaration that reality is absolutely non-dual and tolerates no *other*,

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and there is no doubt that the world comes to us as an *other*, as something different from, and opposed to, ourselves. We have therefore to regard it as mere appearance, by which we mean that it is something which we cannot deny but which at the same time cannot really be there.

The fundamental difficulty of the Advaitic theory is how to explain this false appearance. One has to call this appearance false, only in view of the faith that reality is utterly alone. But actually the world of difference and distinction does not immediately appear to be false, but comes to us as real. And we do not normally understand how there can be an appearance of something which is not there, except in an illusion. And so we are told that the world is an illusion.

Now in every illusion, there is always ignorance of the underlying reality in the place of which the illusory object appears. The world-illusion also must be due to our ignorance of the underlying reality which is the self or Brahman.

But the question at once arises : 'Whose ignorance?' We cannot refer it to Brahman which is all knowledge, and it is absurd to think that Brahman is ignorant. Nor can we refer it to individuals, because individuals themselves are illusory and can arise only when there has already been illusion. Their ignorance cannot possibly explain the ignorance and illusion of which they are the products.

Advaitic writers have taken much pains and shown much ingenuity and resourcefulness of subtle arguments to provide for ignorance or *Avidya* in their scheme of thought. It is obvious that Brahman alone, which is mere consciousness and beside which there is nothing else, cannot explain the objective world. We cannot understand

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how Brahman which at most is pure subject, can go so far out of itself to appear to itself as object. Since Brahman alone is real, the appearance of the world must be regarded as illusory. But without some ignorance no illusion is ever possible. The most straightforward answer to the question 'whose ignorance?' would seem to be that it is of the person who has the illusion. This is the answer favoured by Shankara himself. (see his comment on Vedanta-Sutra 4-1-3).

The latter advaitic writers have greatly elaborated their theory of ignorance, and have found reasons to distinguish between ignorance which belongs to different individuals and ignorance which is not so limited to particular individuals, but is universal and pervasive. My ignorance may explain the illusion which I have. But we believe in a common world, even in a world which may not be seen by anybody. That world too is illusory, and requires for its explanation some ignorance which is not limited to individual persons. But we cannot think of an impersonal ignorance, of ignorance which belongs to nobody. Ignorance is not a self-subsistent entity. It must belong to some conscious spirit and since this universal kind of ignorance cannot belong to individual persons, it is referred to God, the universal spirit. It sounds rather odd to say that God is ignorant. God is certainly not deluded by the ignorance, which is ascribed to him, as he is all-wise and omniscient.

The theory of ignorance has been devised to account for the world which is after all illusory. Ignorance, therefore, in the case of God means nothing more than the capacity of producing the illusion of the world. Ignorance (*ajnana*) which is considered a limiting adjunct (*upadhi*) of God is called *Maya*, (literally meaning a magical capacity as that of a magician who can put up a magical show), while

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ignorance in the case of individuals is called *avidya*, literally meaning lack of knowledge. Even Shankara has described God as one having the great magical capacity of producing the illusory show of the world (*mahamayin*).

Later writers have tended sometimes to turn *Maya* into a cosmic principle which provides the stuff for the entire visible world, scarcely distinguishable from the *Prakriti* of the Sankhya philosophers. They have tended to treat *ajnana*, called *Maya*, not merely as an epistemological fact that one does not know or has misunderstood or misconceived things or is merely confused, but as a constitutive principle which modifies itself into the manifold things of the world. They seem to be confirmed in their position by the declaration of the Shvetashwatara Upanishad that one should know *Maya* to be *Prakriti* and the great Lord (God) to be the owner of *Maya*.^{*} But all these attempts however ingenious, and elaborate, do not seem to have been quite successful in explaining the illusion of the world. We have already seen how ignorance (*avidya*), which is supposed to be the ultimate cause of the illusion cannot be referred to individual souls, because individuality itself is a product of ignorance and is illusory. When ignorance is referred to God, we have to ask whether there is really any God, beside Brahman, who can own this ignorance. From the Advaitic point of view, Brahman alone is there and Brahman is not properly conceived as God. God is certainly relative to the world of men and things, of which he is the Lord, creator and sustainer. Brahman is pure consciousness (*shuddha chaitanya*) but is said to be God when attended with *Maya* (*mayopahita*). I like to interpret this saying as meaning that Brahman, misconceived by us, appears as God. God thus appears to be a product of misconception, error or ignorance and cannot really explain the primal ignorance.

^{*} *Mayam tu Prakritim vidyat mayinam tu Maheshwaram.*

Although in my opinion all attempts to explain the illusion of the world fail to achieve their object, it is well to recognise that for the main objective of the Vedanta philosophy, such explanation is not at all necessary or important. We shall do well to remember that the Vedanta philosophy is not meant to construct a credible theory of the world or explain the various facts of our experience. It is meant mainly to show us the way to achieve liberation or spiritual freedom. This is supposed to be achieved through an intuitive knowledge of Brahman as identical with our very self. The Vedanta philosophy can properly be studied only by those who are anxious to get rid of the sorrows of life and are sincerely desirous of achieving salvation. Advaitism is not meant to satisfy the disinterested curiosity of students who want to have an idea of the nature and structure of the world or of reality which appears to us as the world of ordinary experience.

Shankara, in the introduction to his great commentary, has described the qualifications of a genuine student of Vedanta. One indispensable qualification is the earnest desire for salvation, and what is most important for us to know from Vedanta is how salvation is to be achieved. Salvation is to be achieved through a firm intuitive knowledge of the self as one with Brahman. What is important for a genuine student of Vedanta to realise is that the self is identical with Brahman. It is not so important to know that the world is illusory or how the illusion of the world has arisen or is possible.

Of course, if we believe that Brahman, which is pure subjectivity, is alone real, then we are bound also to believe that the objective world must be illusory. But if we merely know that the world is illusory, there will be no spiritual gain for us. Many philosophers have held that the visible world is mere appearance. But they were not apparently

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brought any nearer to their salvation by their philosophy. People have constructed various theories to explain the details of the world-illusion, but the genuine Advaitists would be relatively indifferent to them. They would be quite tolerant of any theory, if it did not clash with their fundamental tenet that the self is one with Brahman. In fact, they openly say that one can hold any theory if it helps one to realise the inmost self (*Pratyagatman*). Sureshawara, Shankara's immediate follower and commentator, whose authority can scarcely be questioned, clearly says that any theory or method that helps people on to a sound understanding of the inmost self is certainly right and valid. What is important is the realisation of the identity of the self with the absolute. The theory that helps one to a sound understanding of the self is not so important. We know different Advaitists have propounded different theories of the self and the world in relation to the absolute, such as that of 'limitation' or 'appearance'.

One cannot realise one's identity with Brahman unless one has completely disassociated oneself from the world, unless, that is, one has ceased to take any interest whatever in the world. When such a thing actually happens, the world is bound to appear as mere appearance. It is not difficult to understand that the appearance of reality is lent to the world ultimately by our continued interest in it.

When one has realised that the world is mere appearance or illusory, one has, I think, really known all that has to be known about it. It is futile to try to make clear how the illusion has taken place. As the Advaitic criticism of all the different theories of illusion known in Indian philosophy has made it abundantly clear, an illusion or illusory object cannot really be explained. It is better to be content with the realisation that it is an illusion.

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Later Advaitists try to explain illusion through *avidya*, as if *avidya* were the real cause of illusion. What does Shankara say about it? He says in his Introduction that *adhyasa* or illusion is called *avidya* by the learned. I take this to mean that my misperception itself is all the ignorance that there is. To say that *avidya* is the cause of illusion is really to confess that illusion is inexplicable, because *avidya* itself is nothing real. As an Advaitist writer has rightly said, the proof of *avidya* as *avidya* is the fact that it cannot stand logical examination or treatment; if it could stand such examination, it would be something real. It is clear that *avidya* does not admit of logical treatment. It is futile to think that it can be made further intelligible. As long as I misperceive a thing or have an illusion, I must carry the burden of ignorance myself. It is no use seeking for a seat of ignorance in somebody else or in the breast of the world-ground or God or Brahman. When Shankara was asked whose ignorance it was that caused the illusion, he gave the unequivocal reply that the ignorance was of the man who had the illusion (see his commentary on Vedanta-Sutra 4-1-3).

From the Advaitic point of view, the whole world is illusory; but all our empirical knowledge, derived through the so-called valid means of knowledge such as perception, inference, etc. has reference to the world, and if the world is illusory, then all our empirical knowledge must be condemned as illusory too. And if we lose our faith in our empirical knowledge, derived from perception and inference, from science and history as well as our personal intercourse with other men, our practical life would become quite impossible. But to say that the world is illusory or even to draw the inference that the world must be illusory, is not exactly to realise that it is illusory. We can realise the illusoriness of the world only when we have realised our identity with Brahman and its sole reality. Till this

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realisation has taken place, we are allowed to retain our belief in empirical knowledge and carry on all the duties of our practical life. For most people, the identity of the self with the Absolute is a matter of religious faith and not a fact of direct personal realisation. Along with this faith, whether firm or feeble, they continue to believe in the world and in the vicissitudes of their worldly life. Believing in the world and its lack of self-subsistence, they have to believe in some world-ground to which the world owes its maintenance in existence as well as its changing fortunes. This is our God who is non-distinct from Brahman.

Even Shankara grants that till the rise of the supreme knowledge of our identity with the Absolute, we may take our empirical knowledge as quite valid for all practical purposes. But the question, first, is whether the world which we normally take to be real is only going to be false or unreal when the supreme knowledge arises or whether even now it is really non-existent. In the case of an ordinary illusion, we know that the illusory object, which we see, does not really exist at the place where it is seen, not only when it is realised to be illusory, but also when it is not so realised, that is, it did not exist there at any time. So if we believe in the sole reality of Brahman, we cannot at the same time believe that the world is real, at least for a time when we seem to see it. If the Advaitists are pressed, they will have to admit that the world is non-existent even when it is seen; in fact it never existed before and does not exist now and will never exist in future. So I am persuaded that it is merely as a concession to commonsense that the present practical reality of the world is granted. It is no good saying that the world is unreal only from the highest point of view, when we are anxious to ascertain the real and true state of affairs, not dependent on any mere points of view. If we calmly reflect, we are bound to realise that any point of view, short of the highest, is misleading and is not calculated to determine the true state of affairs.

Secondly, we have to ask whether self-realisation is something that is going to happen to me when I come to realise that I am nothing but Brahman. Is there room for any happening in the placid breast of the absolute which suffers no change whatever? The Advaitists, if pressed hard, will grant that there is no happening anywhere, that nothing has ever happened or is ever going to happen. So Madhusudana, the renowned authority on Advaitism, quotes with approval, the well-known verse of Gourapada's Mandukya Karika : *na nirodho na chotpattir na baddho na cha sadhakah na mumukshur na vai mukta ity esha paramarthata* (11.32). 'There is no disappearance nor origination; no one in bondage, no one who works for success ; no one who is desirous of emancipation, no one who is emancipated—This is the highest truth' (V. Shastri's translation). If there is no cessation or origination, then all our activities and perceptions have wholly to be denied. I have to say that I do not see the world even when I am looking upon it. Is it possible to do so? Is philosophising of any use in reaching this position?

The fact is that Advaitism ultimately represents a mystical position and all attempts to rationalise it are bound to fail. I have no doubt in my mind that Advaitism in its higher reaches is nothing but mysticism pure and simple. Prof. W. T. Stace in his interesting book *Mysticism and Philosophy* has indicated certain unmistakable marks of mysticism, such as a sense of undifferentenced unity, dissolution of individual personality and essential paradoxicality. I find all these marks present in their undiluted form in Advaitism. Advaitism as well as Brahman is a matter of realisation through direct intuition. The intuition of Brahman, if and when it occurs, is bound to be characterised by a sense of undifferentenced unity, since Brahman is non-dual and suffers no difference and distinction whatever. It cannot also be said that in the

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realisation of the absolute unity, we retain any sense of individual personality. Our individuality, in such realisation, will become already lost or be felt to be dissolving. In the Advaitic literature, we are ever admonished to get rid of our sense of egoity. Prof. Stace thinks that in realising our unity with the absolute, although our individuality gets lost, it is also somehow retained. In his opinion, it is one of the paradoxes of the mystic position that I am lost and also not lost in the final realisation. I think that the mystic will have to concede, even if grudgingly, that he is not altogether lost in the final realisation; otherwise, in trying for self-realisation through mystic intuition, he would be attempting mere self-immolation. Apart from the question of whether personality is lost or retained, I wish to emphasise the point of paradoxicality which Prof. Stace regards as an essential characteristic of mysticism in all its forms. Paradoxicality, as I understand it, means apparent contradiction which cannot be logically resolved. One can easily find that Advaitism is full of paradoxes. Brahman is nothing but the light of pure consciousness and yet it is veiled by the darkness of ignorance. Brahman is altogether distinct from the world, yet it is one with the world. I feel sure I am and yet I am made to realise I am not etc., etc. These paradoxes cause endless difficulties for an ordinary student of philosophy; but if he understands that they are essential to mysticism which Advaitism is, he will cease to be troubled by them. That Advaitism is only mysticism follows from the fact that it is entirely based on the Upanishads. The Upanishads may well be regarded as a repository of mystic utterances of ancient sages, a record of the visions of truth that the sages saw in their mystic experience. It is because Shankara was upholding a mystic position that he had to refer constantly to the Upanishads for its corroboration. If he merely propounded a philosophical theory, he could bring forward many logical

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arguments for its support. We can easily understand that mysticism cannot be reached by any logical argument. The only proof is mysticism is that there have been honest and highly respectable people who have had direct experience of it. These were our Vedic sages and we do well to refer to their utterances in trying to deal with mysticism. This is what Shankara has done.

What is most important from the Advaitic point of view is to attain the mystic vision of the undifferentiated absolute unity in which our self is completely absorbed. That the vision is felt to be a vision of truth and reality is part of the characteristic of mystic experience. If one can once capture this vision, one will cease to be troubled by whatever contradictions our logical mind can discover in it. Even though the mystic continues to see the world after his realisation, he will regard it as quite unimportant and utterly negligible (*tuchchha*), as though non-existent. Therefore he describes it as false.

If Advaitism is nothing but mysticism, how is it that it has found such wide acceptance in India, where most people are not certainly so mystically inclined? The fact is that Advaitism is not approached from a single point of view. It is not regarded merely as mysticism. Many people regard it as both religion and philosophy which are not the same thing as mysticism. It is, I believe, because of its three different aspects of religion, philosophy and mysticism that it has been able to attract to itself so many people who find or hope to find in it satisfaction for their different kinds of interest. We cannot therefore appreciate the full value of Advaitism unless we are able to view it in its different aspects. Advaitism stands, as I have suggested, for a kind of religion as well as a philosophy which have their distinctive flavours. These however are based ultimately on mysticism, but this need not detract anything

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from its value either as religion or as philosophy. Mystics in all lands have been, I believe, primarily religious men. And mysticism for them is merely the culmination of their religious experience. Also, some of the greatest philosophers of the West, when their philosophies are carefully examined, are found to betray unmistakable tendency towards mysticism. This is the case with Plato, Spinoza and several others. But still it is not to be ignored that neither religion as such nor philosophy as such is mysticism.

Religion generally, like philosophy, offers a view of reality, defines an ideal for our life and shows us a practical way in which we may try to realise it. Advaitism has not founded a new religion in India; it merely sanctions the ancient religion of Hindu culture which is supposed to be ultimately based on the Vedanta. Hindu religion covers many different schools of religious thought, and Advaitism represents one such school which generally agrees with other orthodox schools in their beliefs about God, next life, etc.

It may be supposed that Advaitism should be incompatible with any kind of religion, since it does not believe in a real God, distinct from individual souls, whom they can love and worship. But really this is not so. The non-distinction of God from the individual soul is a matter of mystical realisation. Until the realisation has taken place, we go on believing in the world and in God, whom we take to be the creator and sustainer of the world. We are even advised to love and worship this God, out of whose grace mystical realisation may be made possible for us, which is to lead us to salvation or *mukti*, the ideal of Hindu religious life. We are even required to perform the various religious duties that are prescribed for us in Scripture, according to our stations in life. These duties, however,

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are not to be performed for their own sake or with a view to achieving a happy heavenly life after death. Advaitism points out that the life of heavenly bliss is not a worthy spiritual ideal as freedom or liberation is. A heavenly life is after all terminable when the stock of the religious merit acquired by our religious action is exhausted, whereas liberation once achieved remains eternally with us.

Shankara appears to have been a religious reformer. In his time, religious people were generally engrossed in the performance of various religious rites enjoined in the Scriptures. Shankara called them to a life of inner piety and enlightenment. He pointed out that the performance of mere actions, of whatever sort, is not competent to bring us near our goal. It is through knowledge and knowledge alone that liberation can be achieved. But he did not brush aside all religious and moral duties as of no consequence at all. They are, as he expressly recognised, very useful in purifying the mind and making it a fit medium for the dawn of divine knowledge, the knowledge of our essential identity with Brahman. Advaitism is better than certain other religions in that it does not call in a saviour or a mediator to save our souls and does not make undue demands on our faith and credulity. Normally, Advaitism believes in God and conceives him as all-powerful and all-wise and, above all, as possessing the great power of magical illusion (*maya*). So although God is conceived as the creator and sustainer as well as the ultimate destroyer of the world, an Advaitist does not profess to understand how God does all this. This is expressed by saying that he does his work through his magical power, that is, that there is an element of inscrutability in God's ways which transcends human understanding.

Advaitism is very catholic in some respects. It does not insist on worshipping the deity in any particular form.

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One may choose any form one likes, either Shiva or Vishnu or even goddess Kali. We have already seen that it encourages devotion to and worship of God in some form or other. But this is not necessary for Advaitic religion. Apart from any ritual or worship, one may simply concentrate one's mind on some special image recommended in scripture and give oneself up to meditation and contemplation, even without the help of any image. Advaitism as religion, like other Indian religions, is more concerned with internal purification than with external acts of charity and benevolence. It emphasises self-restraint and control of senses and the mind, particularly the restraint of our possessive and selfish instincts.

It does not speak so much of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of men as of the substantial unity of all beings with one another through their unity with God. If the unity is sincerely and vividly realised, then acts of charity and benevolence would, I think, follow almost automatically.

Our ultimate unity with God is no doubt a matter of faith to begin with, but it is different from other faiths which have to be accepted merely on trust, on the authority of some extraordinary personality. The Advaitic faith is offered as something which admits of verification through personal experience, so that, it need not remain to the end a matter of mere faith. One has always the assurance that one can see the truth for oneself if one can go through proper spiritual discipline.

Advaitic religion, as we have maintained, is not so much a religion of external acts or emotional fervour as of contemplation and meditation and inner perception. It is supposed to follow the path of knowledge (*jñanamārga*) rather than that of action (*karma*) or devotion (*bhakti*),

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although these elements are not eschewed altogether. It has thus its special appeal for people of certain special temperaments.

If for Advaitism as religion, the world and its creator God are sufficiently real for all practical purposes, they assume a dubious role for Advaitism as philosophy. Philosophically considered, the world is found to be neither real, nor unreal, and the concept of God is also found to be of doubtful validity. God, for Advaitism, is nothing but Brahman or the Absolute, misconceived by human intelligence. This is what I have suggested to be the meaning of the phrase '*mayopahitam chaitanyam*'—pure consciousness as attended with or conditioned by *Maya*. As misconceived by us, it cannot of course be real. But what is misconceived is, however, the absolute reality.

Advaitism is not philosophy, in the ordinary modern sense, a wholly free rational enquiry without any commitment or presupposition, an adventure of ideas with a view to discovering the ultimate truth with our unaided effort. For Advaitism, truth has been already found and recorded in the Upanishads. What is left for Advaitic philosophy to do is to defend this truth against hostile criticisms and make it generally acceptable to our understanding by removing from our mind all doubts about it.

Three steps are generally recognised in the process of self-realisation. First, the study (*shravana*) of the Vedantic texts to get a clear grasp of their meaning; secondly, reflection (*manana*) with proper reasoning on the matter thus grasped; and lastly, concentrated meditation (*nididhyasana*) on the truth thus understood. Advaitic philosophy is to carry out the second step carefully and faithfully. It is obvious that we cannot employ any kind of reasoning to clarify the Vedantic truth for our

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understanding, but should employ only that kind of reasoning which is in conformity with the assumption of Advaitic truth and helpful for its understanding.

If we follow the lead of unbridled reasoning, Shankara apprehends, we may never come to any sure conclusion, but may have to end in sheer scepticism or utter nihilism, as it has happened in the case of some Buddhists. For an intellectual adventurer, this may not seem so very unwelcome; but for one who is bent on teaching a definite spiritual goal, this would be disastrous; so Shankara has indicated the kind of reasoning we should follow in reflecting on the Advaitic position. Fortunately, this kind of reasoning is not devoid of some persuasive force.

The self is the central, if not the sole, theme of Advaitic philosophy. In our reflection on the nature of the self, we are asked to consider different states of the self in waking life and in dreams as well as in deep dreamless sleep, when we are not conscious of any object. It is assumed that what is essential to the nature of a thing cannot be separated from it. A thing would not be what it is if it loses what is essential to its nature. Now, in waking life as well as in dreams, we cannot deny our participation in a wordly life, whether relatively stable or altogether fleeting. In both these experiences, we are aware of an objective world of which we seem to form a part, but in dreamless sleep there is no such world and we are completely free from any entanglement with an objective world. In fact, we have no consciousness of objects, although consciousness as such cannot be denied. If we are completely unconscious we should never wake up from deep sleep with the clear sense of having slept soundly. This shows that pure consciousness constitutes the self and that worldliness is merely accidental. In itself, the self is wholly free from the taint of objectivity or worldliness.

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Further, on the basis of the assumption of identity between cause and effect, we are advised to reflect that the world which has come out of Brahman, according to scriptural testimony, is non-different from Brahman and has no substantial being of its own apart from its source. The above provides only a sample of the kind of reasoning we should follow in order to facilitate our understanding of the Advaitic position.

I have already referred to the fact that the primary object of Advaitism is not to provide a theory of reality but to show us the way to spiritual liberation or salvation. Fortunately, according to Advaitism, salvation is to be achieved through knowledge, and knowledge means knowledge of reality. So in our attempt to achieve spiritual liberation, we have to obtain sure knowledge of reality, which is also the object of any philosophy properly so called. So even though I have suggested that Advaitism is mysticism pure and simple, it turns out that philosophy is an integral part of Advaitic mysticism. The fact is that what is needed for liberation is not philosophy, but knowledge of reality. And although the avowed object of all philosophy is to obtain knowledge of reality, it seeks to achieve this object through a particular way, viz., by way of logical thought. But this need not be the only way of knowing reality. There may be other and better ways. In fact, mystics believe that mystic intuition is a surer way of knowing the truth than pure philosophical thinking, whose conclusion is never very certain. Shankara too, relying on his unfailing Upanishadic support, believes that super-sensible reality cannot be known through logical thinking, and we should not apply our common logic to transcendental matters (*achintyah khalu ye bhava na tanstarkena yojayet*). But logic cannot be so easily got rid of. There is an ingrained tendency in the human mind towards logic and philosophy. Man is a rational animal.

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And so, even though one may believe in the ultimate truth of mystic intuition, one tries to spin out a rational theory of the world in conformity with the mystic insight. Men are not naturally mystics. Only a few of them are. The majority of mankind are guided by logic and normal experience. So even when one is led by religious and other cultural influences to have some faith in the validity of mystic intuition, one tries to reconcile one's faith with normal experience through some scheme of rational ideas which constitutes one's philosophy. Shankara too has devised his philosophical scheme in close connection with Upanishadic mysticism. For Upanishadic mysticism, the sole and simple ultimate is the absolute reality, which is called Brahman and with which our self is identical. Since Brahman is identified with our very self, there can be no doubt about its reality. We may deny anything else, but the self cannot be denied, because the denier would be a self and his denial would stultify itself.

Now the self is apprehended primarily as the knowing subject and would normally be taken as a knower, but on closer reflection, it is found that a knower is quite unavailable in pure self-consciousness. We do not find in self-consciousness any agent performing the function of knowing, but mere knowing; so we are obliged to identify the self with pure knowing. Thus the Absolute or Brahman which is our self, turns out to be nothing but pure consciousness which is self-shining.

For Advaitic philosophy, pure consciousness is one with pure being. In fact, being has no meaning apart from consciousness. Advaitism accepts without reservation the fundamental idealistic position that being is inseparable from knowing. Unknown being, or some being which may or may not be known has no sense for Advaitism. All being that can be ever asserted is known being or being which is knowing. Thus knowing, which constitutes the essential

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nature of the Absolute, is not a mere epistemological function to be exercised by a knower, divine or human, but metaphysical reality.

But the absolute, which is pure consciousness and being, cannot provide sufficient explanation for the facts of experience or the world we see around us. And so the Advaitists sometimes argue that the function of philosophy is not to explain the facts of experience since such explanation is not quite successful. The function of philosophy, in their view, is rather to see things away by means of transcendental reflection, with a view to reaching ultimately the mystic position. But *prima facie*, the demand for philosophising is a rational demand for a rational explanation of the facts of experience. And this demand cannot be misunderstood as a demand for the dissolution of all facts into no facts. So, generally, Advaitic philosophers try to provide some explanation of the world in the light of their fundamental assumptions.

While trying to provide this explanation, one finds at once that the complete explanation cannot come from the absolute alone which is pure consciousness and pure being. There must be something more to make any kind of objective appearance possible. If Brahman alone were there, as it is supposed to be, everything would be dissolved in the fluid light of knowledge and there would be nothing to talk about or explain. So the Advaitists were obliged to invent their theory of *Maya* to explain objective appearance with all the apparent distinctions and differences in it. As it is other than Brahman, the principle of knowledge and being, *Maya* is conceived as lacking in knowledge and in fact opposed to knowing and deficient in being. Commonly, *Maya* is conceived as the principle of ignorance and illusion, which conceals from our view the self-shining absolute, and makes us see, in its place, the multifarious things of the world. Although other than being,

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Maya is not altogether non-being. If it were non-being, it would serve no purpose. Therefore, it is not conceived as utter non-being, but only as deficient in being. We have already referred to the Advaitic emphasis on the principle of identity. In dealing with *Maya* and the world, the Advaitists, we find, are obliged to deny the validity of the law of Excluded Middle which demands that a thing must be either real or unreal but can never be neither real nor unreal. But the Advaitists say that the world or *Maya* is such an entity that it cannot be called either real or unreal. It is believed that some day the illusion of the world, like any illusory object., will pass away. So we are presented with an inevitable dilemma: If the world were unreal it would not appear at all, and be seen ; and if it were real, it would never pass away as it is supposed to do on the rise of true knowledge. It is thus that the Advaitists have come boldly to deny the validity of the Excluded Middle in the case of *Maya* and the world which is its creation or modification.

I need not develop or elaborate here the theory or doctrine of *Maya*, which is an integral part of Advaitism, as this topic has been adequately treated by other writers elsewhere. I wish merely to point out that even with this theory, the Advaitists do not really succeed in providing a satisfactory explanation of the world of experience. This need not, however, be accounted a special defect of Advaitic philosophy. A thoroughly consistent and satisfactory philosophical scheme has yet to be constructed which can accommodate and thoroughly explain all the facts of experience. All the philosophical schemes that human ingenuity has so far devised somehow fail to achieve their ultimate objective, as Shankara's criticism of the then existing Indian systems has abundantly shown. Plato, Aristotle and Spinoza as well as Kant and Hegel, to name only five of the great

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philosophers of the West, have all their inexorable critics who fail to be satisfied by their systems. So if Advaitism has failed where other philosophies have done no better, it should not, as I said, be accounted a special defect of Advaitic philosophy. Whether ultimately satisfactory or not, Shankara's philosophy bears comparison with some of the highly respectable philosophies of the West.

In its view of the world as mere appearance, Advaitism bears a striking resemblance to Kant's philosophy. The world of experience, with which science deals and which we ordinarily take to be objective and quite real in its own right, has been shown by Kant to be nothing more than appearance. Some Western students of Advaita Vedanta have suggested that Advaitism would be better understood if one came to it after a study of Kant. In this country, we have been familiar with the idea that the world is a mere appearance, although normally it is not taken to be such. But for the hard-headed Westerners, it was a most difficult proposition to swallow that the world of objective facts, which we never doubt for a moment, was not real in its own right but depended on our faculty of understanding, was not real in itself but only an appearance. But Kant believed himself to have proved it to be so and Advaitists should be glad to have the weighty support of Kant for their view. Kant's further thesis that self-consciousness, or (in Kant's circuitous phraseology) the transcendental unity of apperception, is basic to the world of knowledge will be appreciated by all Advaitists, for whom, too, the self occupies the pivotal position in reality and experience. But there is a vast difference between Kant's conception of the unity of self-consciousness which lies at the basis of all experience, and the Advaitic conception of the unitary self on which everything in thought and experience depends. The unity of self-consciousness which Kant's analysis has revealed to be the precondition of all

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experience is, by Kant's own admission, merely logical and formal, without any metaphysical significance. There need not be, for aught we know, any real self which combines and relates the data of experience into objects of knowledge. Even if there be any such self, we cannot possibly know it, simply because we have no intuition of the self, and without intuition there can be no knowledge properly so-called. But for Advaitists, the self is nothing if it is not real; in fact, it is the highest reality.

Just as Kant has criticised the subjective idealism of Berkeley, Shankara too criticised the subjective idealism of the Buddhists. This has led some people to sense realism in Shankara. But Shankara's position in this regard is similar to that of Kant. The subjective idealist is ready to regard subjective ideas as wholly real in contrast to external objects, which may be illusory. Both Shankara and Kant would regard internal ideas as well as external objects as equally phenomenal and there is no reason to prefer internal ideas to external objects as more real than the latter. Shankara's position is wholly idealistic, in the sense that he believed all things to be dependent on knowing for their being and as inseparable from knowing.

He conceived the whole objective world as mere appearance in contrast with Brahman which is the absolute reality. While thinking of Brahman and the world as reality and appearance, one is reminded of the philosophy of Bradley who has made the distinction between reality and appearance popular in modern times. Many people compared Bradley's position to that of Shankara, and it is true that there are many apparent points of similarity between the two positions. A student of Shankara will no doubt appreciate Bradley's criticism of the various categories of thought as yielding mere appearance and welcome his idea of the absolute as free from all relations.

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But an Advaitist will never accept his view of absolute reality as comprehending in itself all appearances, transmuted and reconciled with one another and relieved of contradictory elements. The Advaitic absolute cannot afford to be so hospitable to appearances. Appearances depend on the reality of the absolute but the absolute is not so dependent on the appearances. In fact, it is completely dissociated from all appearances. The Bradleyan absolute is a whole in which all the appearances are accommodated with suitable modifications, whereas all appearances are negated in the Advaitic absolute.

Bradley was not a strict follower of Hegel but his philosophy was largely inspired by that of Hegel; and it may be interesting here to compare Hegel's idea of the absolute with the Advaitic idea. Shankara and Hegel would be in perfect agreement with one another in their view of ultimate reality as wholly spiritual in character. They would also agree in thinking that ordinary perception and thought are not competent to comprehend absolute reality properly. For both Shankara and Hegel the absolute alone is real, and, as there is no doubt about a spiritual character, the so-called matter which is unspiritual must be regarded by both as in some sense lacking in reality. But they would wholly disagree in their notions of the absolute. For Shankara, Brahman is pure knowledge and existence, utterly dissociated from any element of materiality and objectivity. It may be regarded as pure subject, although it is no longer significant to speak of it as subject when there is no object. The Hegelian absolute is not pure in this sense, as it includes both subject and object as elements within itself. Nature too falls within the life of the absolute, although in a spiritualised form. The Hegelian absolute is a whole which is described as a process. But Brahman cannot be described either as a whole or as a process. While the Hegelian absolute is all-inclusive, the

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Advaitic absolute, Brahman, is all-exclusive, if by 'all' we understand 'everything objective'. Hegel admits that our ordinary understanding is not competent to comprehend the absolute, for which the higher faculty of reason is needed. Reason proceeds dialectically, and starting from any idea, e.g., the idea of mere being, it can reach the idea of the absolute by a process of speculative reasoning. For Shankara, too, our ordinary understanding is incompetent to grasp the nature of Brahman which is beyond the scope of ordinary thought and speech. But Brahman can be, and has to be, realised by a direct intuition which excludes the idea of any rational process, dialectic or any other.

In spite of many points of similarity with these and other idealistic systems of thought of the West, it cannot be said that Advaitism as philosophy is very satisfactory. In fact, it is never meant to be so. Shankara never conceived philosophising or the way of rational logical thinking as the proper way of knowing the ultimate truth. It is some kind of direct intuition, aided by scriptural revelation, that is supposed to bring us face to face with truth and reality. It is not therefore surprising that Advaitism as philosophy has very little positive contribution to make. Its main strength lies in its negative criticism. Shankara has demonstrated, by his searching, acute criticism, the unsatisfactory character of all existing philosophical systems of his time and dispelled many of our comfortable illusions about life and the world.

Advaitism is unsatisfactory as philosophy mainly on account of its self-contradictory notion of *Maya* which defies all logical treatment. We have already seen that the world of experience cannot be explained by Brahman alone, and so *Maya* as the principle of ignorance and illusion is brought in to explain the world. But *Maya* by itself can do nothing, since it is not a self-subsistent

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principle and cannot stand by itself; and it has therefore to be referred to some self as its support. It cannot be referred, as we have seen, to the individual self, because, no individual self is there before *Maya* begins to operate. Nor can it be referred to Brahman, not only because it is preposterous to think of Brahman as ignorant but also because if it secures a lodgment in the heart of the absolute, it will remain there eternally, and there will be no release for any soul. Moreover, release is not something to be achieved anew (for in that case, it would be impermanent); it is already there. But there can be no release if there is *Maya*; so ultimately the Advaitists have to take the final step of denying *Maya* altogether, even here and now, and accept mysticism with an open mind. If for Advaitism as religion the world as well as its ground *Maya* is real for all practical purposes, and for Advaitism as philosophy it is neither real nor unreal, for Advaitism as mysticism the world as well as *Maya* is altogether non-existent. As Advaitism both as religion and as philosophy has some special features, it must have some special features even as mysticism. But I am not competent to study them properly as I am but imperfectly acquainted with mystical literature and so I cannot discuss how Advaitic mysticism differs from other forms of mysticism, theistic or atheistic, Buddhist, Christian or Mohammadan. It is enough for me to know that Advaitism shares certain common characteristics of all mysticism, and I have no doubt in my mind that mysticism is the natural consummation of Advaitic religion and philosophy.

Against Advaitism as mysticism we cannot possibly raise any objections. All our objections are likely to be of a logical character, to all of which the Advaitic mystic may legitimately answer that his position does not admit of any logical treatment. Even patent contradictions may be cheerfully affirmed and accepted within the limits of

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paradoxicality, which is an inevitable and essential characteristic of mysticism.

I do not however think that it is necessary to embrace mysticism in order to be able to appreciate Advaitism. If we understand some of its dogmatic assertions *cum grano salis*, a little liberally, we shall find much to admire in Advaitism. Let us suppose, concurring with Hegel as well as Shankara, that ultimate value and ultimate reality are not really separable. Brahman is not mere *sat* (being) and *chit* (knowledge) but also *ananda* (bliss). What is not of any value need not be taken as fully real. The world is false and, in some sense, unreal, though not in the sense that it is actually non-existent or that I do not physically see it; but in the sense that for my spiritual interests it is of no account whatever.

The main interest of Advaitism is, however, as we have seen, in the identity of the individual self with the absolute. And Advaitism has certainly made a valuable philosophical contribution in emphasising the unitary and spiritual character of ultimate reality in which we are all rooted,—contribution which would be appreciated even by those who are not strict Advaitists. I can truly say that I am one with Brahman, *aham Brahmasmi*, not indeed in my embodied and objective character, but in my inmost and fundamental being. The ultimate reality, which is the source of all being, is also, at the same time in some important sense, the end of our being—the harbour of eternal peace, to which we all seek to return at the close of our present troublous voyage through the sea of worldly life. The ultimate reality may be conceived with Hegel and Shankara as the highest value, the ultimate ideal of all humanity. And there is a sense in which I may truly say that I am one with my ideal, '*aham Brahmasmi*', not indeed in actual fact, with all my limitations, but in faith and

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aspiration. This faith and aspiration will some day, one is permitted to hope and believe, come true when one is purged of all one's limitations and defects.

If we calmly reflect, we shall find that most of our troubles, the troubles that plague humanity at all times and places, proceed ultimately from our bodily and worldly interest. They constitute our bondage, from which relief may be sought only through a cultivation of other-worldly interests—the interest of knowledge and truth, of selfless love and service, of beauty in all its higher forms. If by constant reiteration of the falsity of the world and by condemning our identification with the body as a delusion, Advaitism can reduce to some extent our intense worldly interests, it will have made a valuable contribution to the advancement of civilisation and culture, of religion and morality as well as of peace and freedom.

After what I have already said about Shankara, it is hardly necessary here to record my estimate of Shankara as a philosopher. He was undoubtedly a great philosopher with a very acute and critical mind, as is quite evident from his philosophical arguments and criticisms of other philosophies. But it has to be admitted that he was not a pure philosopher in the modern sense—in the sense of a free rational thinker without any presuppositions and assumptions. He philosophised, no doubt genuinely, but within the limitation of a religious tradition which he inherited and enormously strengthened by his own contributions. Religion has not ceased to be a force in human lives and most serious philosophers, if not all, share some religious faith, and there is nothing wrong if they philosophise in the light of their religious faith. Even those who apparently think freely and do not mention their religious faith will be found to be influenced, at least subconsciously, by what their religions have taught them.

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It has been so in the case of Fichte and Hegel, Bosanquet and Royce. Even Kant, I believe, philosophised in the light of the pietistic faith of his parents. St. Thomas Aquinas and Al-Ghazali avowedly remained in their philosophy within the bounds of their respective religions. It was therefore no discredit for Shankara that he philosophised in the light of Vedantic mysticism which he accepted. Far from being a discredit, it may be accounted a great credit for a philosopher that he can join his philosophical endeavours with his religious faith, for this adds seriousness and urgency to his endeavours which seem to be lacking in the efforts of many pseudo-philosophers of to-day, who no doubt think quite freely, entirely on their own and in utter disregard of all traditions, but hardly to any serious purpose.

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According to Advaitism, the absolute alone is real. The absolute is conceived as an undifferentenced unity in which there is no distinction of any kind. It is pure consciousness, devoid of all objective contents. It follows therefore that in the absolute there is no duality or multiplicity, which always presupposes some distinction. It also follows that the absolute cannot be given as an object, because the pure, contentless consciousness can never be objectified. The absolute must therefore be free from objectivity and duality.

The world, which is always given as an object and which cannot be conceived apart from multiplicity and distinction, cannot be identified with, or made a part of, the absolute. The world and the absolute cannot obviously be identified, because they are of opposite natures. It is also clear that the world, which is so opposed in nature to the absolute, cannot be merged in the absolute and made one with it, without falsifying the nature of the absolute.

When the world cannot be identified with the absolute or included in it, we can only conclude that the world is utterly different from the absolute. And if the absolute alone is real, the world, which is different from the absolute, must be a false appearance. In fact there is no world, although we happen to see one. Our perception of the world is therefore an illusion.

How is this illusion possible? In every illusion we mistake one thing for another; and such a mistake is possible, because the thing to be known is not known in its proper character and some false character is attributed

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to it. There is no mistake or illusion about a thing when it is known in its proper character. Ignorance of the real object is thus a necessary condition of all illusions. But the ignorance, which is necessary to explain an illusion, is not mere lack of knowledge. Where there is ignorance, necessary for illusion, there is no doubt lack of knowledge (of the real object), but there must also be attribution of some false character (to the object). Ignorance thus in the case of illusion functions in two ways; first, it prevents the knowledge of the real object and, secondly, it makes us see something else in the place of the object. Objectively considered, ignorance may be said to hide the real object from view (*āvaraṇa*) and to display a different object in the place of the real one (*vikṣepa*). The illusory object is not made up of any real constituents; it may be said therefore to be an effect or a mode of ignorance itself. Its substance is that of ignorance and it persists so long as ignorance is there. When the ignorance of the real object is removed by a true knowledge of it, the illusory object is no longer seen.

In the same way the theory of ignorance seeks to explain the illusion of the world. The only reality that is there is the absolute and in its place we see the world on account of our ignorance of reality. The world is an effect or a mode of ignorance. It is made of the stuff of which ignorance is made. It persists so long as the true knowledge of the absolute does not arise to dispel our ignorance. When knowledge arises, ignorance vanishes and with it the world too disappears.

Ignorance thus is the ultimate principle of advaitic cosmology. Every fact or event in the world, whether physical or psychical, is explained as a mode of ignorance. The world, being an illusory appearance, also requires a real basis. The illusory object is seen in the place of the

real one which supplied the basis of the illusory appearance. In the case of the world-illusion, the absolute supplies the basis. Whatever appears in the world-illusion does so on the basis of the absolute. But the form and the content of any appearance are not determined by the absolute which is present indifferently in all cases. It is ignorance that gives form and content to all appearances. The absolute is the basis of them only in the sense in which a real object is the basis of the illusory appearance which is seen in its place. The real object does not enter into the constitution of the illusory object and is not affected by the presence or the absence of the latter. In this sense is the absolute or Brahma the basis of the world and of everything in it. So far as the character and the constitution of the things in the world are concerned, they have to be referred to ignorance or ajñāna.

I

The Objective View of Ajñāna

How are we exactly to think of this ajñāna? Since it is the material ground of all things in the universe, it appears very much like Prakṛiti. According to the Sāṅkhya, everything in the universe has been evolved out of Prakṛiti. In the advaitic theory too every kind of objective existence is described as a mode of ajñāna. When the advaitic writers try to describe the evolution of the different forms of worldly existence, they trace them all to ajñāna. In fact, in their cosmology ajñāna occupies the same place as is given to Prakṛiti in the Sāṅkhya system. The descriptions of ajñāna and Prakṛiti are very much alike. Sometimes it is even expressly said that Māyā (i.e. ajñāna) is another name for Prakṛiti.

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How do we then distinguish the advaitic view of Ajñāna from the Sāṅkhya view of Prakṛit? The Sāṅkhya think of Prakṛit as eternal, having neither beginning nor end; the advaitists regard ajñāna as beginningless but not without an end. Ajñāna comes to an end when the knowledge of Brahman arises. In the Sāṅkhya theory, Prakṛiti is as real as Puruṣa and both can exist independently. In advaitism, ajñāna is not as real as Brahma, because it disappears while Brahma continues to exist; and as ajñāna cannot exist without the basis of Brahma it cannot be said to have any independent existence. But despite these differences from Prakṛiti, when the whole evolutionary process of the world is traced to ajñāna, it is, I think, taken in all seriousness as a real entity. It is of course not as real as Brahma, but nevertheless it is real as far as it goes. When ajñāna is described as neither real nor unreal, it is meant, according to this view, that ajñāna is not real like Brahma which never ceases to exist and is not unreal like a fictitious entity (e.g. the horn of a hare) which never appears.

Although the ultimate reality is one without a second, it is not difficult for the advaitists to ascribe some reality to ajñāna, because they grant a kind of reality even to illusory objects. Our knowledge of any object is the test of its reality. We have no direct access to the inner being of things. We can say that a thing exists, only when we know it. And since an illusory object is also known, it must be granted some reality. If it were altogether unreal, it would not be seen at all. Its relative impermanence certainly makes it less real than other ordinary objects but does not reduce it to nothing. When we allow some reality even to an illusory object, which appears only for a time and is in most cases seen by a single individual, it is not unreasonable to grant some reality to ajñāna which is relatively permanent and is experienced by us all in

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common in the form of the world. Still if we say that the ultimate reality is one without a second, we mean that it is without a second of its own kind, and ajñāna surely does not enjoy the kind of reality which the ultimate reality, Brahma, has. Thus the absolute unity of Brahma is not affected by the reality of ajñāna.

From some other considerations also, it seems, we are forced to grant some reality to ajñāna. If we are to explain our experience, in which multiplicity and difference appear to be patently given, we cannot but accept some entity other than Brahma. Brahma is the principle of pure consciousness; it can explain neither the objects nor their differences which we experience. It is precisely to explain these elements that the theory of ajñāna has been formulated; and so, if we suppose that ajñāna has no reality or that there is absolutely nothing besides Brahma, then the facts of experience will remain altogether unexplained. It seems necessary, therefore, to accept ajñāna as a real entity (with the qualification that it is not as real as Brahma).

But can we not take ajñāna as a subjective fancy? A subjective fancy is real and it very well explains the being of fancied objects. But it seems that we cannot take ajñāna as a subjective fancy. A subjective fancy explains only fancied objects, but the objects of the world are not like fancied objects and so they cannot be explained by a subjective fancy. That the objects of the world are not merely fancied can be readily seen from the fact that they are possessed of a fixity and an order which are foreign to fancied objects. We cannot make and unmake them as we can make and unmake fancied objects. The subject is always free in its fancy, but we never feel free in our experience of the world. We would like to see many things

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which we do not find and many other things are thrust upon us from which we would gladly keep away if we could. Moreover if everything were fancied, there would be no distinction between right knowledge and false knowledge and it would undermine all rational procedure in thought and conduct.

Besides if ajñāna meant mere subjective fancy, there would be no ajñāna in deep sleep, as there is no fancy in that state; and so everybody would get rid of ajñāna and realise mokṣa in sleep, without any effort on his part, thus rendering all spiritual discipline, under the guidance of a teacher in accordance with scripture, quite unnecessary.

Since the spiritual ideal is not already attained, it means that there is some real positive obstacle in the way to be overcome. This positive obstacle is ajñāna. This is also the ground of all objects. In fact objectless subjectivity, which is one with freedom or spiritual ideal, is not realised, because there is the appearance of objects. So the obstacle, which prevents the realisation of the ideal, provides also the ground for the appearance of objects.

In false knowledge objects appear when they are known and endure so long as they are known. The objects of true knowledge exist, when they are not known by us, in ajñāna or in a state of unknownness. When they so exist, they are not merely unknown, because if they are simply unknown, we cannot even know that they exist. We have already said that the proof of the existence of any object is always the knowledge that we have of it. So if the objects are to exist as unknown, it is necessary that they should be known as unknown. And it is contended that when an object is not known, it is known as unknown. When we know an object, we also apprehend its

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knownness; but the knownness of an object can be apprehended when it is consciously distinguished from its unknownness. So when we apprehend the knownness of an object in knowledge, it implies that we were conscious of its being unknown when it was not known. But how can an object be known as unknown? Is it not a contradiction to speak of one and the same object as both known and unknown? The answer to this question is that by 'unknown' we are not to understand mere negation of knowledge. When we say that an object is known as unknown we only mean that it is indeterminately known. It is not known as characterised by any attributes but simply indefinitely known as being there. This is how things are known to exist in 'unknownness.' If we did not believe in such existence and supposed that things exist only in their 'known' state, i.e., only when they were known in their determinate character, we should be unable to distinguish a case of valid knowledge from that of illusion. The objects of true knowledge are distinguished from the illusory ones only by the fact that the former exist both before and after the occurrence of their knowledge, while the latter exist only when they are known in illusion and have no existence beyond it. When an illusory object is known to be such, we no longer believe in its objectivity, but in the case of other objects, even when they are not being known, we do not disbelieve in their objectivity. This means that although they are not known in their determinate character, they are indeterminately known as simply being there. We have already said that ajñāna is the ground of all objectivity. And since we believe in objective existence far beyond the range of our actual knowledge, we cannot but also believe that there must be ajñāna beyond individual knowledge and existence, to provide ground for objective being.

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We are required further to posit two kinds of ajñāna, universal and particular. There is a general ajñāna which hides Brahma or Reality from our view and shows itself in various forms of worldly existence and to which all individuals in their worldly life are equally subject. But besides being ignorant of Brahma, we are ignorant of particular things of the world and in this ignorance we differ from one another. When I know an object, another person may not know it. In such a case it has to be understood that while my ignorance, veiling the object in question, is removed by my knowledge, his ignorance, hiding the same thing from his view, is not removed. When I see an illusory object, another person may not see it; he may see the real object which is mistaken by me for another. Here my ignorance hides the real object from my view and shows itself in the form of the illusory object, while the other person has no ignorance about the object in question. The illusory object here is the product of my ignorance and therefore it appears within my experience. Thus we find that particular individuals have their particular ignorances which explain the facts of their private experience. All common objects, having relatively independent existence outside our individual knowledge, are the products of the universal or cosmic ajñāna, and all other objects which have no such independent existence and appear only to particular individuals are the effects of their respective particular ajñāna.

We have already pointed out that ajñāna in every case hides some real object from our view and shows itself in the form of some other object in the place of the real one. The hidden object is relatively the real object and the object which is shown forth is only an ajñānic form of the same. The illusory object, that I see, is the product of my ignorance which works with the support of the real object

present before me. The real object is the support of my ajñāna and it is also the substratum of the illusory object seen in its place.

Brahma is the ultimate reality and it is hidden by the cosmic ajñāna which brings forth all forms of objective existence. Brahma is the support of this ajñāna and the substratum of all objects which are created by it. The different things of the world are the different forms in which Brahma appears under the cover of ajñāna. What we call a table is nothing but Brahma determined by ajñāna in the form of the table. Brahma is thus the substance of everything that we see in the world; any particular object is nothing but Brahma appearing through ajñāna in the form of that object. When through our particular ignorance, an illusory object is seen in the place of a real one, what is hidden from our view is Brahma determined in the form of that object which is the substratum of the illusory object.

Nothing is absolutely unreal. The illusory object is less real than the ordinary object which is its substratum; and the ordinary object is less real than Brahma which is the substratum of all objective existence. Every experience has its characteristic object which cannot be altogether unreal, because if it were absolutely unreal, it would not be given in experience. Different objects have different grades or kinds of reality. So properly speaking there is no illusion in the sense of an experience that presents us with an object which is not there. The illusory object is also real, so long as it is there, inasmuch as it is created out there by my ignorance, and it is called illusory simply in the sense that it is removed by my knowledge of the object which is its substratum. Thus we see that as all objects are real (in their proper grade), ajñāna, which is the ground of them all, should be taken as no less real.

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II

The Subjective View of Ajñāna

The view of ajñāna, explained in the last section, does not seem to bring out the true significance of the term. In order to understand the true meaning of ajñāna, we must view it in relation with other important ideas of advaitism. The Advaita Vedānta is primarily a science of freedom (mokṣaśāstra), of freedom conceived as the ultimate spiritual ideal. This is accepted as the highest ideal, because it affords perfect satisfaction ; and it can be perfectly satisfactory only if it is eternal and changeless. An ideal which is liable to change and exists only for a time cannot be perfectly satisfactory. But an eternal and changeless ideal cannot be brought into existence by our efforts, seeing that whatever is produced is liable to change and decay. The ideal must therefore be an eternally accomplished fact. It must be absolutely real because it is the highest ideal.

The ideal is not other than the self. What is other than the self cannot be attained unless the self is destroyed. But an ideal, which would require, in its attainment, the annihilation of the self, would be no ideal. Hence the ideal should not only be an eternally accomplished fact, but it should be also one with our very self.

But if the self is the ideal, and if as ideal, it is absolutely real, what accounts for our present condition which appears to be anything but ideal? It is precisely here that the theory of ignorance comes in. We are in fact eternally free but through some unaccountable ignorance, we imagine ourselves to be in bondage. It is because ignorance alone stands between ourselves and the ideal that knowledge can be of any avail in realising our end. Ignorance thus means nothing but a misconception about our true nature.

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This misconception about the self or reality does not bring about a real change in reality, just as the misconception of a piece of rope as a snake makes no change whatever to the real rope.

Two things must be particularly borne in mind. We should note first that advaitism is essentially a doctrine of freedom. It is not primarily interested to give us a theory of the universe, calculated merely to satisfy our intellectual curiosities regarding the nature and character of objective things. It is interested mainly to deliver the message of an eternal and absolute freedom, which is self-revealing and self-revealed, and lies absolutely bare in its self-evidence at the depth of our soul.

We should note secondly that the means suggested for the realisation of this ideal is knowledge and knowledge alone. There are other ways of realising the highest spiritual ideal advocated by other schools of thought. There are, for instance, the ways of action and devotion. But in opposition to these, advaitism advocates knowledge, pure and simple. This saving knowledge is not evidently the knowledge of objective things and their connexions which we ordinarily get from science and philosophy. The knowledge, which is required for our self-realisation, is the true knowledge of the self as it really is.

Our view of ajñāna should be in consonance with the view of the spiritual ideal and the means of its attainment, so unequivocally advocated in the Advaita Vedānta. That view of ajñāna will be clearly wrong which will make the present reality of mokṣa impossible or doubtful, or will require anything but knowledge for its attainment. We find that this requirement is satisfied if we take ajñāna in the very ordinary and easily intelligible sense of mere ignorance. The self which is absolutely free and happy is

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through ignorance supposed to be in bondage and suffering, and it can get rid of its false bondage and suffering by knowing that it is really free. We are repeatedly told in advaitic literature that ajñāna is removed by knowledge. If this is so, then by ajñāna we cannot understand anything but what is meant by ignorance in the commonest acceptance of this term.

That ajñāna should be taken as ignorance in the ordinary sense is clear also from the fact that it has an object. A mere positive entity, which is not of the order of knowledge or ignorance, cannot have an object. But ignorance in the ordinary sense can have an object. That of which one is ignorant may be said to be the object of one's ignorance.

We should take into our consideration another important point. Brahma, the ultimate reality, is, according to advaitism, pure intelligence, absolutely simple and altogether unconnected with anything else. But if reality is pure intelligence, what accounts for this unintelligent world? The absolute having no connexion with anything else, the world cannot be grounded in it. There is no rational connexion between Brahma and the world, as there is between a ground and its consequent. The absolute cannot create the world out of itself or out of any foreign material. For to create, in whatever way, is to act and to act is to change; and so if the absolute (Brahma) were to create the world, it would be finite and limited and cease to be absolute. We are told that Brahma joined with ajñāna produced the world, that, though in itself unrelated with anything else, Brahma gets related with the world through the mediation of ajñāna. The real meaning of this statement seems to be that although in truth there has been no creation and there is no real connexion between Brahma and the world, we suppose in our ignorance that the world

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has been created by Brahma and is related with it. In fact there is no world, and what we think to be a world, including ourselves in it, is all a false show, generated by ignorance. That is to say, in ignorance, we think there is a world while in fact there is none.

This simple conception of ajñāna as mere ignorance may not find favour with many learned people. They may object that in advaitic literature ajñāna is invariably spoken of as beginningless (*anādi*) and as something positive in nature (*bhavarūpa*), having the power of veiling (*avarāṇa*) and producing (*vikṣepa*) things, and constituting the material cause (*upādāna*) of the world; and we cannot imagine mere ignorance to transform itself materially into the form of the world.

They may also say that I have reduced Advaitism to mere subjectivism which has been clearly repudiated by Śaṅkara in his criticism of vijñānavāda.

It may be further argued that my view of the matter leaves no being to the world, whereas in advaitism the world is not supposed to be wholly unreal. In fact advaitism is so realistic that it grants some reality even to illusory objects. To say that the world has no being is to say that there can be an appearance of a thing which is not there. This is as good as to support *asatkhyāti* which Advaitism rejects in favour of *anirvacanīyakhyāti*.

They may further say that since I have reduced everything to mere appearance, I have abolished all distinctions between right knowledge and wrong knowledge, and have thus left no means of explaining our experience. Those who think that ajñāna is an indeterminate entity, which modifies itself into determinate objects of experience and maintains them in being when they are not known by us, offer at least an explanation of experience. But I am simply denying all experience.

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I shall try to answer these objections one by one. First, the description 'beginningless' may be applicable to ignorance also. I was ignorant of many things which I have now learned. But can I or anybody else determine the date from which my ignorance of those things began? My ignorance of things which I never knew and do not know is as beginningless as the non-existence of an object before it is created (*prāgabhāva*). Moreover ignorance is beginningless in the sense that there is nothing objective prior to ignorance. All things, including time among them, being products of ignorance, ignorance must necessarily be thought of as without a beginning, i.e. as being no effect of anything else.

Ajñāna is no doubt spoken of as positive (*bhāvarūpa*). But it is positive only in the sense that it is not nothing. Ignorance too is positive in this sense. Our ignorance of things, giving, as it does, rise to false conceptions about them, is not mere nothing.

The powers of *avarāṇa* and *vikṣepa* may be ascribed to ignorance also, in the sense that when there is a misconception about the true nature of a thing, there is lack of knowledge as well as a false idea about it.

As for ajñāna being the material cause of the world, it should be noted that by 'material cause' is meant that sort of cause which has the same kind of being as its effect. Earth is the material cause of a jar, because a jar is in substance nothing but earth. Similarly ignorance is the material cause of the world only in the sense that the different forms in which the world appears to us are nothing but forms of ignorance. Their reality is the reality of ignorance. They are there so long as ignorance is there, just as the ghosts are there in the trees so long as the child's false fear about them is there.

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When Śāṅkara asserts, in refutation of Vijñānavāda, that external things are not mere ideas, he is not saying that either of them is real; both of them may be equally illusory. The Buddhistic position, criticised by Śāṅkara, is that the ideas alone are real and the so-called external things are nothing but our ideas. As against this, the advaitic position is that, first, external things are not ideas and secondly, neither external things nor ideas are real; both are unreal and apparent.

When Advaitism maintains *anirvacanīyakhyati* in opposition to *asatkhyati*, it merely emphasises the fact that in illusion something is seen and it is not mere nothing that we see. But it does not mean that there is in fact an indescribable kind of real existence which we see in illusion. When we speak of anything as indescribable (*anirvacanīya*), we simply mean that it is not like a real thing which does not disappear, nor like an unreal one which does not at all appear. It is in this sense that we say that it cannot be described either as real or as unreal. But we do not mean that there is any existent thing which is neither real nor unreal. When a sort of reality is granted to illusory objects, the real purpose is not to make the illusory also real, but to show that what we ordinarily take to be real, is not better than what appears in an illusion. We are not to raise the illusory to the level of the real, but to understand the essential hollowness, illusoriness or unreality of the so-called real things.

As regards the question that our view does away with the distinction between right knowledge and wrong knowledge, we have to confess that from the advaitic standpoint all empirical knowledge is false. If any knowledge, other than Brahma-knowledge, which has no definite content, were true, it would constitute a complete refutation of Advaitism. So it is essential for Advaitism to maintain that all empirical knowledge is false. Still so long

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as we believe in empirical facts, we may have some empirical standard to judge of our knowledge of such facts as true or false; and this procedure will be valid so long as we are ignorant of true reality, just as our judgments of truth and falsity in dream hold good so long as the dream lasts. From the viewpoint of truth all our empirical judgments are equally false, just as from the point of view of waking life, all our dream-judgments are equally false.

It should be clearly understood that it is not the purpose of Advaitism to explain the facts of experience in the sense of supplying a rational basis for them. If the facts of experience, as they are taken to be, had a rational basis, they would remain what they are and we too would remain bound in their fetters. The main objective of all Advaitic thinking is to reduce the so-called empirical facts to no facts; and this purpose would be entirely defeated if Advaitism confirmed their facthood by supplying a rational basis. The supposed explanation by the theory of ajñāna is, I believe, intended merely for the initial satisfaction of those who have not yet emancipated their minds from the tyranny of objective facts. But in fact the supposed explanation is no explanation at all. The facts of experience are supposed to be explained by Brahma and ajñāna. They cannot be explained by Brahma alone. But how are Brahma and ajñāna to be brought together? You cannot bring together light and darkness. If ajñāna remains apart from Brahma, there will be dualism; if ajñāna becomes one with Brahma, Brahma will lose its purity and cease to be Brahma. So it is evident that the supposed explanation is an illusory one.

Thus we find that the objections against the view that ajñāna is mere ignorance are not insuperable on the basis of Advaitism. We can go further and say that the view of ajñāna as real positive entity residing in Brahma is really inconsistent with the thesis of Advaitism. If there is another

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entity beside Brahma, there will be no real absolute unity which Advaitism seeks to maintain. You may say that ajñāna is not like Brahma; it is neither eternal nor independent as Brahma is. But when there is another entity, however dependent upon it, the ultimate reality is not an absolute unity in any straightforward sense of the term. There will be unity only in the sense that there is nothing like Brahma but not in the sense that there is nothing besides Brahma. In this highly Pickwickian sense, absolute unity cannot be claimed exclusively by the advaitic absolute but it can be shared in common by the Hegelian or Rāmānujist absolute also.

Moreover if we believe in ajñāna, as a real entity, however unlike Brahma, it becomes difficult for us to understand how it can ever be removed. It is of course said that it is removed by knowledge. But knowledge only reveals the nature of things, it can never destroy them. It is said that just as our knowledge of an object removes the positive ignorance covering that object, so our knowledge of Brahma will remove the root-ignorance which covers Brahma. But here the first difficulty is whether it is possible to have a knowledge of Brahma which is like the knowledge of an object (*vṛtti-jñāna*). There seems to be no objective mode of knowledge which will fit in with the characterless nature of Brahma. Secondly, even if there is such a knowledge, what is the guarantee that it will really destroy the positive entity, ajñāna, especially when this knowledge itself is a mode of ajñāna? If, however, we think of ajñāna as mere ignorance, it is perfectly intelligible why it should be removed by knowledge.

III

The Ultimate Status of Ajñāna

We have taken ajñāna to be mere ignorance and the question will naturally arise : 'To whom does this ignorance

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belong?' It cannot belong to the absolute, because it is pure consciousness and as it makes no judgment, it is not liable to any error or illusion. Ignorance cannot belong to individuals also, because they are the products of ignorance and cannot therefore be the seat of ignorance which must be present before them.

The answer to the question is that ignorance evidently belongs to the person who considers himself to be in bondage. The man who labours under a delusion is the man who is ignorant. Nobody is in fact in bondage and still if we think that we are in bondage, then it is we who are ignorant. If our limited individuality were really the product of previously existing ignorance, then of course we could not be the seat of that ignorance. But in fact we are not produced or limited by anything. We have simply the false idea of the world, including ourselves in it as limited beings, and this is the work of ignorance. My individuality consists in my limitedness. But although I am not really limited, I, in my ignorance, consider myself to be so; this is how I am the product of my own ignorance.

We may even say that ignorance belongs to Brahma or the absolute. What are we after all? We are nothing but the absolute itself which is the support and substance of everything that is. Ultimately everything has to be referred to Brahma and so if ignorance is anything, it must rest on Brahma.

But is ignorance anything at all? We have said that we have the false idea of our limitedness and are thus the product of our own ignorance. But false ideas are possible only for limited beings who can be ignorant. When in fact there are no limited beings how can there be any ignorance at all? If in truth I am the absolute reality, which is pure knowledge, how is it then possible for me to be ignorant also? If the ultimate reality is all knowledge, how is it conceivable that there should be ignorance anywhere?

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We must admit that in truth there is no ignorance. It is mere ignorance to suppose that there is ignorance. The world-appearance is no doubt an illusory show born of sheer ignorance; but it would be ignorance again to suppose that there is any real ignorance. We are not to be led on to an infinite regress by supposing one ignorance behind another. We can more reasonably suppose that it is one and the same ignorance which appears to be there and also produce the illusory appearance of the world.

But if ignorance is not really there, there is no reason why there should be an appearance of the world. Yes, there is no reason why the world should be there. If any such reason were there, it would be impossible to reject the world as a baseless fiction. We have to understand that the world is not there and cannot be there, and still we seem to see it. It is on this account that we call it indescribable (*anirvacanīya*). That which cannot possibly be and is still seen is called *anirvacanīya*.

It may be supposed that in saying that there is no ajñāna, we are going against many advaitist authorities who, with many subtle arguments based on perception, inference and other sources of knowledge, establish the being of ajñāna which is present not only in dream and waking life but also in sleep, when nothing is seen, and persists even in *pralaya* or dissolution when no worldly life exists. In answer to this, we have to point out that there is surely ajñāna so long as we suppose that there are different states of the self as waking, dreaming and sleeping, and different states of the world as creation and dissolution. But we should understand that from the advaitic standpoint these states are but ignorant fancies. The advaitic proof establishes the presence of ajñāna in all such states, whether of the self or of the world, and really means that they are all illusory. The purpose of advaitism is not to establish in truth the being of ajñāna,

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for that would be blocking the way of our liberation. Advaitism has to take us out of ajñāna and this it can do only by imparting to us the sure knowledge that in truth there is no ajñāna.

From the ultimate point of view, therefore, there is no ajñāna and there is no objective appearance also. But perhaps we shall be claiming too much for the advaitist if we suppose that he sees no appearance at all. But although he may not say in common parlance that he does not see any appearance, he believes, if he is true to his faith, that there is no real appearance, and with a proper training of his spiritual insight he will see and realise that there is and has been no appearance at all.

But so long as one is in the realm of philosophy, one cannot deny all appearance. Without appearance there is no objectivity, and without objectivity, there is no thinking, and without thinking no philosophy is possible. So even advaita philosophy cannot deny that there is some appearance. It will only insist that the appearance is mere appearance and in fact, is not there at all.

It may be noted here that the advaitists do not claim to arrive at their conclusion about the nature of ultimate reality by a ratiocinative process. By no amount of logical thinking about the facts of experience, you can ever come to the conclusion which denies all facts. The nature of ultimate reality is revealed by scripture and accepted on faith. The revelation may in reality mean nothing more than a change in the spiritual outlook, resulting in a conviction that there is nothing of value in objective things, that all peace, light and being are from within and cannot be derived from without. This conviction sets the task and defines the goal of advaitic philosophy.

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The main purpose of advaitic philosophy is to guard its revealed truth against all possible doubts and criticisms as well as to demonstrate its possibility to our reason. The principal problem is, on the one hand, to show whether what in reality is nothing can yet put up an appearance and, on the other, to bring to us a clear notion of self-evidencing subjectivity as something possible and real without the least connexion with anything objective.

By a careful examination of the fact of illusion it may be shown that the appearance of what in fact is not can and does take place. Every contradiction, which is not merely verbal, is a false appearance. It cannot be anything in fact, still our thought stumbles against it.

By an examination and analysis of our ordinary notion of subjectivity, it may be shown that subjectivity does not really involve any objective element.

But when all this is done, what is actually established is that the object *may be* a false appearance and the subject *may be* really free from all objective encumbrances. But so long as the appearance is there, its ultimate nothingness, though believed from scriptural testimony with the assent of reason, is not fully realised.

The full realisation of the illusory as no fact comes when it ceases to be seen and is not even remembered. We may believe that the subject is absolutely free but we do not live and enjoy it so long as it is, or appears to be, oppressed by an objective appearance. It is therefore incumbent on a real advaitist to cure himself, by some spiritual discipline, of the false delusion which makes him see an appearance where there is none, and to raise thereby his conviction to a vision in which nothing but true shines in its purity and immediacy.

Our conclusion then is that in truth ajñāna is nothing at all. For philosophy which is not truth itself, but an attempt

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to make truth rationally intelligible, ajñāna is a false appearance, which cannot be real because of its inconsistencies, but is still seen to be there. For common sense and science, wedded to objective outlook, ajñāna may be taken to be the ultimate stuff out of which the various forms of worldly existence have been evolved.

IV

The Philosophical Basis of the Theory

All philosophical theories, when consistently held, are found on examination to depend on certain ultimate positions in logic, epistemology and metaphysics. These positions work as ultimate convictions whose validity is not questioned or doubted by their adherents. They cannot directly be proved or disproved but other propositions are proved or disproved on their basis. In any case our understanding of a philosophical theory is bound to remain inadequate so long as we have not seen the underlying principles on which it is based. I shall therefore try in this section to bring out the basic positions which seem to support the theory of ajñāna.

It seems that 'A is A' is the only form of judgment that a supporter of the theory of ajñāna can understand in logic. That is to say, he believes in pure identity and has in his logic no use for what is usually described as 'identity in difference'. He strongly insists that what is different cannot be identical and a thing can never be what it is not. This seems to express a self-evident truth for him and what goes against it is held by him to be quite erroneous.

Even when he says 'A is B,' he does not take A and B in their literal sense, because literally they stand for different things and what is different cannot be identified. He has to change the meanings of A and B, so as to make the proposition an expression of some underlying identity. The

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relational propositions of modern logic and the predicative propositions of traditional logic are both equally unwelcome to an advaitist. Since his logic does not permit relational propositions, he cannot accommodate multiplicity and difference in his philosophy, and since he does not accept even the predicative form, he cannot ascribe any character to his reality. Can he assert any proposition, even 'A is A,' since there must be some difference between the first A and the second A? The proposition surely says something about something and this is not intelligible without ideally introducing some difference between the subject and the predicate. Hence he ultimately rejects all propositional knowledge, but there is no doubt that 'A is A' is the nearest approach to the expression of undifferentenced identity.

It is easy to prove the theory of ajñāna on the basis of this principle. The main contention of this theory is that the world is false. By 'the world' we are to understand the world as it is known by us. We cannot discuss about any other world. Now this world appears to us to consist of things and their qualities. The ideas of 'things' and 'qualities' are essential to our notion of the world. A world of mere qualities, not owned by any things or a world of mere things having no qualities is not and cannot be known by us. But the conception of a thing and its quality can arise only when some distinction has been made between them; and we are able to make this distinction because we think that a thing remains the same although its quality changes. If a thing appeared and disappeared along with its quality, there would be no distinction between them. Hence it is necessary that a thing should possess variable qualities. That is to say, a thing with a particular quality should remain the same even when that quality is absent. This is the underlying presupposition of the conception of things and qualities, and of our ordinary view of the world.

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But this presupposition cannot be justified. Ap_1 is never $= Ap_2$, where p_1 and p_2 stand for different qualities. As $Ap_1 = Ap_2$ is clearly false, because it violates the principle of identity, our view of the world which involves this must also be false.

We are led to the same conclusion also by a slightly different consideration. The world is amenable to our thought only by virtue of its possessing certain common universal characters. Without these common elements, the world will not be thought and known. A common element is that which appears in different contexts without losing its identity. But is it possible? If what is here is only here, then we cannot say that what is here is also there, i.e. not here. Thus we see that our view of the world as pervaded by universal elements, presupposes the impossible position of a thing's being what it is not, and hence it must be considered as false.

The main advaitic position in epistemology can be summarised in the following three propositions :

1. Self-evidence is the meaning and criterion of truth.
2. Knowledge is the prius of everything else.
3. The subject can never be an object.

1. If we do not accept self-evidence as the meaning of truth, we have to suppose that a piece of knowledge is true because it satisfies certain conditions different from itself or its self-evidence. Here two questions arise : first, why should we accept the satisfaction of these conditions as the mark of truth? and, secondly, how do we know in any particular case that these conditions have been satisfied? As regards the first question, we can answer either that the satisfaction of these conditions defines truth because of some other reason or that it is self-evident that the meaning of truth is brought out by the satisfaction of

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these conditions. We cannot follow the first alternative very far and have to fall back upon the second alternative at some stage or other. And this alternative says in substance that a thing is true because it is self-evident. As regards the second question, it has to be noted that a knowledge cannot be taken to be really true unless the knowledge that the required conditions are satisfied is true. In order to know (1) that a particular knowledge is true, we must know (2) that it satisfies the conditions necessary for its truth. Here we see that the truth of the first knowledge is dependent on the truth of the second knowledge, and since we have not accepted self-evidence as the criterion of truth, the second must depend on a third and so on ad infinitum. In order to avoid the vicious series, we have to accept some knowledge as true because of its self-evidence. Why should we not then consciously accept from the beginning that self-evidence is the meaning and the criterion of truth?

If self-evidence alone gives us real truth, then we find that all our objective knowledge is infected with untruth. Whatever can be doubted is not self-evident and there is no object of any experience which cannot be doubted. Whatever is given as a content in our experience can be doubted. Nothing appears in our knowledge with the mark of its reality patent on its face. But when everything is doubted, is there anything left over which is self-evident? Though every object can be doubted, knowledge as such is never doubted. It is present even in doubting. Thus knowledge comes to be regarded as alone true, everything else is other than truth, i.e. false.

2. The above position is confirmed by the theory that knowledge is the prius of everything else. It is ordinarily supposed that the object must already be there and the subject which is also conceived in an objective way, must also be there, before knowledge can arise as a result of their interaction. This idea is utterly foreign to advaitic

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way of thinking. The advaitist insists that prior existence of objects, independent of all knowledge, can never be established and knowledge can never be seen to arise as a result of any objective condition. We prove or disprove other things on the basis of knowledge, and there is no means by which knowledge may be disproved at any time or place. Everything else requires some proof for its being in terms of knowledge; knowledge alone is its own proof. Knowledge must be taken as something ultimate and recognised as the only instance of absolute being.

We find that objects are given in knowledge. Objects outside knowledge cannot be known by us and we have no right to believe in their existence. But objects cannot exist even within knowledge. If the objects are not connected with knowledge they will not be known. And if they are to be connected with knowledge, they must either be in contact with knowledge or be identified with it. These are the only two ways in which we can conceive of a real direct connexion between two real entities. But there is no contact between knowledge and objects, because contact is available only between two material things and knowledge is not a material thing. Nor can knowledge be identified with its objects, because knowledge is an intelligent principle and objects are quite unintelligent. Thus we see that objects cannot exist in knowledge, although they appear to be there. They must therefore be an illusory appearance.

3. This position might be avoided if we believe that the subject can also be an object. If the subject could also be an object, then the subject in its self-evidence would include the object also. We might then easily suppose that there is a universal subject whose objective aspect is constituted by the visible world. But Advaitism rules out any such hypothesis. It holds rigorously to the view that the subject and the object can never be identified, so that

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whatever can be objectified has to be kept apart from the subject. The subject and the object are utterly disparate in their nature and being. If truth and reality belong to the subject, they must be denied of the object. The object obviously lacks the self-evident character of the subject and cannot therefore claim the truth which the subject enjoys. If by reality we mean independent reality, then it cannot belong to the object, seeing that the object is dependent on the subject. It may be objected that if the object is dependent on the subject, the subject is no less dependent on the object, because there is no subject without an object. In answer to this objection, it has to be pointed out that pure consciousness, which really constitutes the un-objective being of the subject, has in itself no character called 'subjectivity'. Its subjectivity appears in relation with objects and is consequently as illusory as the objects themselves. Ultimately there is only pure consciousness, free from the duality of subject and object. Its being, in and for itself, absolute and independent, cannot be described in terms of any positive character.

Since Advaitism regards knowledge as the ultimate reality, its metaphysics cannot be sharply distinguished from its epistemology. Still certain of its considerations concerning being may be treated as metaphysical rather than epistemological. They too are inspired by some simple presuppositions. We can mention two here : first, being never passes into non-being, and secondly, being is absolutely simple. The first proposition does not simply repeat the logical principle 'A is A.' The logical principle expresses our inability to think A as not-A. The metaphysical principle expresses the factual impossibility of real being passing out into non-being. It emphasises the fact that the real can never be made unreal. It may be supposed that we always find new things produced and old things destroyed in nature. But what is actually found is only change of form. Nowhere is it found that something

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has come out from absolute nothing or that something, which was real, has become absolute nothing. Only a false appearance can vanish but real being can never cease to exist. If being could be made and unmade, there would remain no meaning in being.

The second proposition that being is absolutely simple is proved by the fact that our idea of being, even to the most rigorous examination, does not reveal any constituents which are simpler than itself. Being is never compound or a complex product of two or more constituents. If being were to be produced by two or more things, those things would have to be either real or unreal. If they are real, then being is already granted to be there without being produced; and if they are unreal, i.e. without any being, then being would come out of nothing which is impossible. What is not simple must be a product of its constituent elements. As being cannot be a product, we have to grant that it is absolutely simple.

Let us now see the consequence of these positions. Since being is absolutely simple, and it cannot pass into non-being, it follows that there is no change in real being. If being were something consisting of many elements, then by different arrangements of these elements, we might maintain change in being without turning it into non-being. But as being is absolutely simple, its change cannot mean anything but its turning into non-being which is impossible. But in fact we seem to find change in the world. This change cannot belong to being as such ; it belongs to the different forms in which being appears. It is only the forms that change. As being cannot change and as there is no form which does not change, being as such must be formless. But if being is formless, what about the world which appears only in some form or other? We clearly see that we cannot assign real being to the world.

It may be argued that although being is simple and formless, it accepts the determinations of many forms.

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But how are the determining forms related to being? They are either identical with being or different from being or both identical with and different from it. If they are different from being, so that being is kept apart from them, then they become unreal and being unreal, they cannot determine anything. They cannot be identified with being, because the unchanging being is never the same thing as the changing forms. We cannot also say that there is both identity and difference between being and forms, because it involves self-contradiction, identity and difference being incompatible with each other. We have therefore to conclude that real being is changeless and formless. All forms and change are its illusory appearance.

Thus we see that such simple propositions as 'A is A,' 'the subject is not the object,' 'being never passes into non-being' etc., which are not generally doubted in ordinary thought, inevitably lead, when rigorously maintained, to the conclusion that the world given as an object with changing and various forms is nothing but an illusory appearance. This is exactly what the theory of ajñāna seeks to maintain.

In logic we are confronted with the problem of identity and difference. Logic cannot operate without identities applied to different contexts. In epistemology we have the problem of the relation of knowledge and its object. Is the object transcendent to knowledge or immanent in it? If the object is transcendent, then no real knowledge seems possible; and if it is immanent, then it becomes very difficult to conceive how an object with its material characteristics can exist in the medium of knowledge. In metaphysics we have the similar difficulty of understanding the relation of one and many. There is some marked unity running through all facts of experience and nobody can also deny the infinite diversity which characterises them. How are the many to be combined with the one?

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The Advaitist is persuaded that it is impossible to combine identity and difference, knowledge and object, one and many, into a real unity. Since they appear together and do not admit of real unity, the only possible solution, says the advaitist, is the one that is offered by the theory of ajñāna. What is real is identity, knowledge and unity of being; difference, objectivity and multiplicity are its illusory appearances. It is only in this way that the combination of incompatible characters can be made possible.

V

The Difficulties of the Theory

The theory of ajñāna, as has been already indicated, is inspired by scriptural revelation and is to be ultimately validated by actual realisation in which there is no sense or appearance of duality. But philosophy cannot profitably utilise such non-intellectual sources of knowledge for the solution of its difficulties. Revelation may be false, since the faithful in all religions claim the support of revelation in behalf of their divergent faiths, and it is certain that all of them cannot be true; and it is impossible to decide which of them is true, merely on the basis of revelation. The so-called realisation is an individual experience which cannot be relied on unless supported by evident reasons. If a man gets into a trance in which he is not aware of any objectivity or duality, that will not decide, for philosophy at least, whether in fact there is any duality or objectivity. If philosophy is to accept any theory, it will have to be supported by reason. Are there sufficient reasons in favour of the theory of ajñāna? We have already given some reasons which go to support this theory. In this section we shall try to bring out certain difficulties which a student of philosophy is most likely to feel in understanding and appreciating this theory.

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The theory says that the world of objects is an illusory appearance. It is very difficult to give any direct positive proof of this theory. The objects certainly appear in knowledge. The question is whether they actually exist where they are seen to appear. It may be granted that, as we are acquainted merely with the appearance of objects in knowledge, and as we have no access to the being of objects (as enjoyed by them), we have no ground to assert that objects do exist. But although I may have no ground to assert that they exist and may not know whether they exist, I am not justified in saying that they do not exist. Not to know whether a thing exists is not the same thing as to know that it does not exist. When I reject the proposition that I have any ground to assert that things exist, I do not thereby reject the proposition that things exist, for the two propositions speak of very different things; one proposition speaks of my having any ground for making a certain assertion and the other speaks of the existence of things. When I am made to say that I do not know that things exist, I am not compelled to say that I know that they do not exist. And unless I know that things have no existence, I cannot say that they are an illusory appearance.

It may be supposed that there are at least two proofs for this theory. First, we all have the experience of illusion, and the object of so-called ordinary experience is given in the same way as the object of illusory experience. Therefore it is not unreasonable to suppose that all experience is equally illusory. Secondly, we find that the concepts, in terms of which we think of objective existence, e.g. the concepts of substance, causality, relation, etc., are all riddled with contradiction; and since there is no contradiction in real existence, the existence grasped through such contradictory notions must be illusory.

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Both these arguments appear to be faulty. Let us consider the first argument. We know an objective experience to be illusory only on the basis of some other objective experience which we take to be true. The distinction between illusory experience and valid experience is essential to our understanding of any experience as illusory. When this distinction is the basis of the argument, it cannot validly lead to the conclusion that all experience is illusory, a conclusion which clearly obliterates this distinction. If the conclusion is right, then the basis of the argument must be wrong, and we cannot have a valid argument on a wrong basis. And if the basis is right, then the conclusion must be wrong, which goes against it. Therefore the whole argument must be a fallacious one. In fact an argument which denies in its conclusion all that is presupposed in its premises is no argument at all. We can very easily see the fallacy if we put the argument in a logical form. Put in a logical form the argument will stand thus: illusory experience is objective and ordinary experience is objective; therefore ordinary experience is illusory. The argument may be put in some other form, but in any case we shall find that there is either the fallacy of undistributed middle or that of illicit minor. Put very briefly the argument says in substance that because some knowledge is false, therefore all knowledge is false; and this appears rather absurd. It may be conceded that when we know some knowledge to be false, we may have a suspicion that all knowledge is false. But a *suspicion* that all knowledge may be false is very different from the positive *conclusion* that all knowledge is false. And this conclusion appears to be unwarrantable.

When we recognise a particular experience to be illusory, what we deny is the presence of the object seen at the place where it appears. What we do not deny is the presence of some other object in its place or the presence

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of the same object at some other place. So even when we recognise the whole world-appearance to be illusory, we cannot deny all objective existence. What we deny is the validity of the present appearance of the world. We do not and cannot thereby come to the conclusion that there is no object whatever in its place.

Even if we somehow suppose that there are no external objects, we do not reach the position which the theory of ajñāna demands. We have to deny not only the external objects but also the internal states of the mind. That is to say, we have to see not only that the object seen is not there but also that there is no seeing of it. This seems quite impossible. An objective experience, as experienced, does not exist. The being of the object is not one with our experience of it, and so though our experience may be there, the object may be illusory. But the being of a subjective state is one with our being aware of it. Therefore it is impossible to suppose that a subjective state may be absent even when I am aware of it. Even when we realise that our perception of an object was illusory, we merely deny the existence of the object perceived, we never deny our subjective perception of it. If the perception itself were not there, there would be nothing to be described as illusory. Thus we find that the immediate subjective states are never illusory. If they are not illusory, then the theory of ajñāna is not completely established.

Turning to the second argument we have to point out that our ordinary ideas of objective existence are not found to be infected with self-contradiction by all intelligent persons. So when we find self-contradiction in them, it need not necessarily mean that they are false; it may only mean that our analysis of them has been defective. Even when we are sure that there has been no mistake in our analysis and contradiction is still there, we are not called upon to deny objective existence as such, but to formulate

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other categories which will be adequate to the expression of such existence. One can never reasonably argue that because our ordinary notions of objective existence are defective, there is no objective existence or that no ideas can ever be formed which will be free from the defects in question.

It may be supposed that although there is no clear positive proof for this theory, it explains the facts of experience better than any other theory and is therefore most likely to be true.

We have already pointed out that the theory of ajñāna cannot claim to explain any facts of experience. It is not one of the many theories that can be propounded to explain experience. It is the denial of all possible theories that seek to explain the facts of experience. Any metaphysical theory that will explain such facts must show how they are connected with reality. Such a theory will substantiate the facts and will not deny them. The theory of ajñāna, on the other hand, purports to show that reality has no connexion with the facts of experience, and these facts in reality are no facts at all. This theory will be justified if it can be shown that all possible explanations of the facts of experience are wrong. But although the current theories may be wrong, one can never be reasonably sure that no theory is going to be right. There is no limit to human ingenuity. We can never exhaustively know what theories are possible with regard to the facts of experience, and so it is impossible to decide at any time that all possible theories have been judged and found wanting. Thus the proof of the theory of ajñāna by a disproof of all other possible theories is not possible. Moreover, so long as we are confronted with the appearance of facts, we have not the slightest reason to prefer a theory which simply denies the fact to any other theory which, however inadequately, makes an attempt to give a rational explanation of these facts.

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We have so far seen that there is no reason to believe that the theory of ajñāna is undoubtedly true. Is there any reason to think that it is positively false? It sometimes so happens that although a theory cannot be proved to be right, it cannot also be proved to be wrong. We shall now consider whether there is any reason which goes positively against this theory.

We saw in section III that ajñāna is nothing. When the ultimate reality is pure knowledge, there is no place for ajñāna or ignorance anywhere in reality. But when there is no ajñāna, how can there be any objective appearance at all? We are then required to say that there is in fact no objective appearance. It will not do simply to say that in fact there is no objective appearance but we falsely imagine one to be there, for in that case false imagining at least will have to be granted which will be inconsistent with the non-being of ajñāna. When the theory of ajñāna is consistently maintained, it leads to the position that there is even no false appearance. But if there is no false appearance, the theory of ajñāna will have no meaning; in fact it will not be there at all.

Thus our difficulties here are twofold. First, when we are seeing an appearance, the theory of ajñāna, which implies that there is no appearance at all, cannot but appear false. However wrong-headedly we may imagine an appearance which is not there, our wrongheaded imagination is a complete refutation of the theory. Secondly, if there is no appearance, the theory is not needed to declare its falsity. And besides when appearance is denied, the theory, which is part of appearance, is also denied. Thus it appears that the theory is killed by its own inherent self-contradiction.

It may be supposed that ultimately there is no appearance and the theory itself is not there; but so long

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as we are ignorant, the appearance is there and the theory is needed. When we see the truth, there is no appearance and there is no theory.

But the ultimate state of things is not something yet to come about. It is ever present, and the question is whether it can ever allow the appearance of anything at all. When in reality there is no ignorance and there are no individuals, it is impossible that there should be any appearance. The ultimate reality is pure knowledge and not knowledge of things. It does not see appearances; it is purely and merely seeing. There is absolutely nothing in reality, according to this theory, that can either see an appearance or be seen as an appearance.

It is evident that our difficulty will not be solved by the supposition that the appearances are like dream-appearances which seem real in dream but are not so in fact. There is no inherent impossibility in the idea of seeing dreams when we grant that men pass through different states. But it is utterly impossible for Brahma, which is pure light and does not pass through states, to see any appearance. Moreover just as we cannot judge in dream that the appearances, we then see, are false, we cannot also judge, while we are seeing appearance, that there are no appearances at all.

The theory in the last analysis must deny all objectivity and in so doing it must deny all thinking. For there can be no thinking without objectivity. This being so, this theory cannot even be asserted, far less accepted, by thought. It is impossible thinkingly to know that thinking as such is illusory or erroneous. The verdict of thought that it is erroneous appears as self-contradictory as the declaration of a man that he is dumb. From this point of view the plea that thought may know its own limitation seems quite unacceptable.

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We thus find that the theory of ajñāna, which must needs deny all objectivity and appearance, cannot be verified in experience or validated by thought. Every step in our thought and experience is a direct contradiction of this theory. In fact the contradictions, which the advaitist finds in other philosophical theories, are neither met nor avoided by him. They are simply summed up in a more pronounced form in his theory of ajñāna.

But, for Advaitism, philosophy is not the last word in the matter of truth. In fact the advaitic truth is not realised by mere philosophising and cannot be expressed in the form of a philosophical theory. It is realised in direct intuition. So in saying that the theory of ajñāna seems philosophically untenable, I am merely asserting, from the advaitic point of view, that truth cannot be found in the realm of untruth, a perfectly innocuous proposition which leaves the advaitic position quite unaffected. If people are blessed with a mystic vision in which there is no appearance of objectivity and all memory of past experience lapses for ever and if the vision or intuition comes with the compelling conviction that it is the truth and reality, then all our philosophical difficulties can do nothing to it. For, in the first place, nothing is more convincing than immediate personal experience and secondly, our philosophical difficulties simply cannot exist for such mystic consciousness. Those who have a leaning towards mysticism and believe in the reality and truth of mystic intuition, may very well imagine that their present experience, characterised by objectivity and multiplicity, has no substance of truth in it. The theory of ajñāna thus does not express an actually experienced fact or a truth that can be logically thought. It expresses a faith and a demand which necessarily accompany a certain spiritual outlook. The faith is that the apparent is nought, although

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it is not yet realised to be such, and the demand is that it should be so realised. The faith and the demand cannot, from the nature of the case, be justified and fulfilled in secular life and thought. The justification and fulfilment can come, if at all, only from a spiritual illumination in which all objective appearance will finally and totally disappear.

14

VEDĀNTISM AND THEISM

In this short paper I shall try to determine whether Vedāntism can be reconciled with any form of genuine theism; and if it is not found to be theistic in its tendency, I shall try to indicate what modifications should be made in its theory of reality in order to make it consistent with theistic beliefs.

By Vedāntism I shall mean here only the doctrine of nondualism (advaitism) which is associated with the names of Sankara and his followers. Even within the school of Sankara, different views are held on many important points and it is not always possible to be sure as to what were or would be the views of Sankara himself on those points. But still there is a sufficient consensus of opinion on certain major questions which leaves us no doubt as to the main tendency of the Vedāntic doctrine as advocated in this school.

By theism we understand a doctrine of reality which guarantees the existence of God. Without the reality of God there cannot be any theism in the real sense of the term. But the meaning of the term God is not always taken as fixed. If one takes it to mean reality as such, then, since reality cannot be denied, one has to admit that any theory of reality cannot but be theistic. But that is not our meaning of theism. The very possibility of there being other theories of reality, which are not theistic, implies that the meaning of theism cannot be so widened as to make it identical with any theory of reality. Whatever difference there may be among theists themselves with regard to their meaning of God, they do not certainly think that mere reality can be a sufficient description of godhead. They can never suppose that anything can be God by

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merely being real. God is for them a Supreme Being (and not being as such), on whom all other beings depend. One may even equate God with the absolute ; but the absolute can justly retain the name of God only so long as its reality does not prove hostile to the reality of individuals who love and worship him. If we conceive the absolute in such a way that it alone is real and there is no room for the reality of anything else within it, then our absolutism cannot be a form of theism. Absolutism is consistent with theism if it regards both God and men as constituent parts of the absolute. Even when it equates God with the absolute, it may still be theistic, if it grants distinct reality to individuals who, however dependent upon God, must, according to theism, enjoy a reality which is not the reality of God or the absolute. There is an element of dualism in all forms of theism. There must be some distinction between men or the world on the one hand and God or the absolute on the other. The relation between God and men may be conceived as that of whole and parts, or of substance and attributes or simply as quite unique; but the distinction between them (God and men), which is necessary for the assertion of any relation, must not be done away with. This distinction is clearly suggested by the word '*Īśvara*' which is a name for God in Sanskrit. The word '*Īśvara*' means lord or master, and for the being of the lord or master, it is absolutely necessary that there should be a world of men of whom he is the lord or master.

We are not going to consider here whether in theism we have got a satisfactory theory of the universe nor are we anxious to see whether Vedāntism is logically consistent or true to the facts of experience. But having understood theism in the sense we have just explained, we propose to consider whether Vedāntism is or can be made conformable to it.

At the very first sight it seems clear that Vedāntism is not compatible with any form of theism. For according to

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Vedāntism there is absolutely no distinction in the ultimate reality, the world is not real and the individual is the absolute itself. It thus denies all the requirements of theism which we have indicated above. But still the idea of a limited absolute (*Saguṇa-Brahma*) or God is not foreign to Vedāntism. Although the world is not real, it is not supposed to be altogether unreal. The individual becomes one with the absolute only by acquiring knowledge of the absolute. So long as this knowledge is not obtained he remains identified with a mass of material things which is different from the absolute. It is true that there is no distinction in the ultimate reality from the absolute point of view; but the distinction between men and God is accepted for all practical purposes. Far from denying the existence of God, Vedāntism says that God is at least as real as the world we see. The object, which the Vedāntic knowledge is supposed to accomplish, is the emancipation of men from the bondage of the world. This presupposes that there should be men, bondage and the world, at least for a time, so that such a thing as the emancipation of men from the bondage of the world may be possible. So it is apparent that Vedāntism cannot altogether deny the existence of men and the world. Though it believes in the absolute unity of the ultimate reality, yet on the basis of that reality it seeks to offer us an explanation of God, man and the world. These are not denied but are only shown to have a dependent existence. Each of these entities has got a place in the Vedāntic scheme, although none of them has ultimate reality from the highest point of view. So in a sense it may be said that Vedāntism does not deny theism but goes beyond it. But is it really so? Let us see how Vedāntism explains God, man and the world.

If the absolute, which is conceived as pure intelligence or consciousness (*śuddha-cit*) without subject and object, were alone there, the philosophy of Vedāntism itself would not arise. The very fact that we as subjects and the world-

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appearance as the object are there shows that there must be something, beside the absolute, at the root of our experience. This something is conceived as *ajñāna* or ignorance (literally, non-knowledge).^{*} The whole world of appearance has arisen, along with God and man because of this *ajñāna* being in particular relation to the absolute. The relation of *ajñāna* to the absolute is a peculiar relation. It is such that it does not affect the nature of the absolute in the least. It is likened to the relation of proximity of a red flower to a transparent pillar of glass which appears red on account of the reflection of the flower upon it, although the pillar itself does not thereby undergo any change whatever. What is understood by God is the absolute in association with *ajñāna*. The absolute itself is not God; it appears as God only when it is supposed to be in union with its limiting adjunct *ajñāna*. The world itself is nothing but *ajñāna* assuming different forms.

The different things of the world are the different modes of the being of *ajñāna*. One such mode is the physical organism which we call the human body. When the absolute is taken as associated with this mode, it appears as man. We shall not enter here into the intricate details of the different Vedāntic theories in this connexion. It is sufficient for our purpose to know that without *ajñāna* we cannot get either man or God. In this all these theories agree. So in order to understand what God and man are, it is necessary to understand what *ajñāna* is. What we are to understand by man and God will depend upon what we should understand by *ajñāna*. The idea of *ajñāna* otherwise called *māyā* or *avidyā* is, however, the most confusing conception in the whole system of Vedānta, and it seems

^{*} *Ajñāna* is a technical term. Its other equivalents are *māyā* and *avidyā*. A distinction is sometimes drawn between *māyā* and *avidyā*. *Ajñāna* associated with God is called *māyā* and when it is associated with the individual, it is called *avidyā*.

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that the Vedāntic writers themselves are not very clear with regard to their understanding of it. They are not certainly unanimous about the status of *ajñāna*. We shall now try to ascertain what should be the meaning of this term in Vedānta in the light of some other undisputed tenets of the system.

Vedāntists are convinced by their own reasons as well as by the sayings of the Upaniṣads that the self alone is real, that it is infinite and immutable. But when in ordinary experience they do not find or take it to be so, they have to admit that the so-called experience is nothing but a mistake (*bhrānti*). And this mistake can be due only to an illusion which they call *ajñāna*. I am persuaded that illusion is the only meaning that can reasonably be given to the term *ajñāna* in Vedāntism. When the ultimate reality is one undifferented absolute with no distinction of subject and object in it, the only way accounting for the appearance of the world with its plurality and difference is to suppose that it is entirely due to illusion. This fact of illusion is expressed by saying that *ajñāna* is the cause of the world. It is the cause of the world in the sense in which an illusion is the cause of the illusory object. Its causality is epistemonomic and not constitutive.

Sometimes it is said that *ajñāna* is an indeterminate entity, because in Vedāntic literature it is spoken of as positive (*bhāvarūpa*). But the positive character of *ajñāna* need not make it an indeterminate entity. Even an illusion is positive; it is not a mere absence of knowledge (*jñanabhava*). In illusion we are not met with a blank non-knowledge, but something positive is given to us. Thus we see that illusion may very well be positive but it need not thereby receive an entitative character. If *ajñāna* were really an entity besides *Brahma* (the absolute), the unqualified non-duality of the ultimate reality will be hard to maintain.

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Moreover, *ajñāna* is supposed to require a seat or locus (*aśraya*) and also to refer to an object (*viṣaya*). Now a positive entity may be in need of some locus, but if it is to be capable of having an object it must surely be of the order of knowledge. If we take *ajñāna* as illusion we can very well understand that it should have a locus and an object, because if there is to be an illusion there must be someone to have this illusion and the illusion must be about something.

Further, *ajñāna* is supposed to be cancelled or destroyed by knowledge (*jñānanivarttā*). It is only an illusion or wrong knowledge that can be removed by right knowledge. A positive entity cannot be destroyed by mere knowledge. If an entity is there, it cannot be removed by us merely by knowing it or something else, no matter however accurate, penetrating or comprehensive our knowledge may be. Thus when Vācaspati says that *māyā* has the individual for its seat (*jivāśraya*) and the absolute for its object (*brahmapadā*), all that he seems to mean is that there is an illusion about the absolute and it is the individual who has this illusion.

Now, if it is right to regard *ajñāna* as nothing else than illusion, then the existential status of God in Vedantism cannot be higher than that of an illusory object. We have already seen that without *ajñāna* there cannot be any God. The absolute itself, which is pure intelligence, is never regarded as God. The absolute appears as God only when it is joined to or limited by its adjunct *ajñāna*. This statement, when interpreted in terms of knowledge, comes to mean that the absolute misunderstood or viewed under the influence of illusion is God. God along with everything else in the universe owes his origin and being to *ajñāna* or illusion. There is no real God side by side with the absolute which alone is real. Just as the world is only seen to be

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there without in fact being there, so is God only imagined to be there (*kalpita*) although in fact there is no such thing as God. This is the meaning and consequence of 'the theory of individual creation by perception' (*dr̥ṣṭiśr̥ṣṭivāda*) according to which the individual creates the world when he sees it and which is supposed to give us the ultimate teaching of the Vedānta philosophy (*mukhya Vedānta siddhānta*) (cf. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's *Siddhānta-Bindu*). We therefore come to the conclusion that Vedāntism cannot seriously maintain the reality of God which is essential to all forms of theism. It gives us a God but only an illusory one ; and no sincere theist can be content with an illusory God. Vedāntism does not, it is true, deny the existence of God. But it does not also deny existence even to illusory objects. Mere existence, in the language of Vedānta, means almost nothing unless we know whether it is real (*pāramārthika*) or illusory (*prātibhasika*). Since Vedāntism cannot give real existence to God, we cannot but conclude that Vedāntism does not believe in a real God. When it is said that Vedāntism explains our ideas of God, man and the world we are not to understand that it vindicates the validity of these our ideas. By showing how they have arisen only under the influence of an all-pervading illusion, Vedāntism only proves that they cannot claim any ultimate validity. It is not true, therefore, to say merely that Vedāntism goes beyond theism; it should be clearly recognised that Vedāntism is antagonistic to all forms of theism.

But if it is really so anti-theistic, how is it that so many people still hold fast to it, not as a mere intellectual theory but as a religious creed? Theism seems to be largely ingrained in human nature, and a community of atheists has yet to be found anywhere in the world. But this seems to be belied by the adherence of so many well-meaning

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people in India to the creed of Vedānta. The apparent contradiction is resolved when we remember that Vedāntism is not so atheistic in appearance, although it is undoubtedly so in fact. The atheistic implications of its fundamental tenets are rarely drawn out in clear light by the popular mind. By inculcating belief in a higher reality in the form of *Brahma* or the absolute, Vedāntism seems to offer us a more or less suitable substitute for God; and when further it enjoins upon all aspirants after right knowledge and salvation the duty of worshipping God in any suitable form, and of performing other religious functions, it seems to make itself immune from all charge of atheism. It does not always seem to be clearly realised that the highest goal of life, according to Vedānta, is an ever accomplished fact and is not something that has yet to be achieved, that the individual being identical with the absolute, there is no higher reality which can be in a position of God to him. Since the absolute alone is there, we cannot even say that there has been actually any illusion. For the absolute is not of course susceptible of any illusion and nothing else is there to be misled by an illusion. The illusion not being there, there cannot actually be any God, man or world. So it is said :

There is no cessation, no origin, no one is in bondage and no one is working for salvation; there is no one who is desirous of salvation and no one is there who has attained it;— this is the highest truth.

*Na nirodho na cotpattirna bandho naca sādhaḥ
Na mumukṣurṇa-vai mukta ityeṣa paramārthata*

Maṇḍukya Kārikā, Chap. 2, Verse 32.

The quintessence of Vedāntism, which is so boldly declared in the above couplet, is scarcely realised by the

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popular mind because it is singularly free from all passion for logical consistency. The fact is that the ordinary man never believes in Vedāntism in this extreme form. The ordinary Vedāntist thinks that in his present empirical existence (*vyavaharikavastha*), there is a real distinction between God and him, although he regards God as his highest self (*Paramatma*). He prays to God to help him to achieve the end of his life, even though this end consists in his realising his identity with God which is an accomplished fact. He thinks that the troubles of his worldly life are due to *ajñāna*. But he never seriously takes *ajñāna* to be a mere defect in his perception. He believes in *ajñāna* either as a constitutive principle of the world or as a playful energy of the lord. To escape from the influence of *ajñāna*, the ordinary man, who believes in Vedāntism, knows that he should have recourse to the knowledge of the absolute; but he also knows that the knowledge of the absolute (*Brahma-jñāna*) can dawn upon him only when he has completely purified his mind and heart by undergoing a long and arduous course of spiritual discipline. The performance of ordinary religious duties, enjoined by the Vedas forms part of this discipline. Even devotion to some deity in the form of Rāma, Kṛiṣṇa or Śiva, does not fall outside this course. So the life of an ordinary Vedāntist remains indistinguishable from that of a theist.

We have already seen that a genuinely theistic attitude cannot be sincerely maintained on the strict non-dualistic basis of Vedānta. So if the beliefs and practices of ordinary Vedāntists, which are, to all intents and purposes, theistic, are to be justified, certain changes are absolutely necessary in the Vedāntic scheme of things. In the first place, the absolute non-duality of the ultimate principle will have to be given up. *Ajñāna* will have to be taken in all seriousness as a constitutive principle of the world or at least as the

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creative energy of God or the absolute. It will have to be recognised that *ajñāna* cannot be cancelled by mere knowledge. This will follow as a consequence from the reality of *ajñāna* as a constitutive principle of the world. No real entity can ever be cancelled by mere knowledge. If salvation consists in getting rid of the influence of the world, it will have to be seen that mere knowledge is not sufficient for the purpose.

These things are in a sense conceded by Vedāntism itself, although it has not done so quite consistently or clearly. When the universe of our experience is not explained by the absolute alone, it is evident that there is something else beside the absolute. When, further, *ajñāna* or *māya* is described as consisting of three elements of different character (*trigunātmika*), and is also supposed to admit of the distinction of whole (*samaṣṭi*) and parts (*vyāṣṭi*) we get the impression that *ajñāna* is taken as a real entity similar to the Prakṛti (matter) of the Sāṅkhyas. The elaborate description in Vedāntic literature of how the different things of the world have been evolved out of *ajñāna* helps only to confirm this impression. But this means that absolute non-dualism (*advaitism*) has to be given up. It is said that the non-duality of the absolute is not affected by the being of *ajñāna*, because the being of *ajñāna* is not of the same status (*samasattāka*) as that of the absolute. But since there cannot be any differentiation of degree or kind in being as such,* if *ajñāna* is once granted to be there, it cannot but affect the non-duality of the absolute. The being of *ajñāna* can be supposed to be less than that of the absolute only in the sense that it is less persistent. *Ajñāna* is supposed to come to an end on the rise of right knowledge, whereas

*See my paper on Bradley and Sāṅkara in the *Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress*, Vol. 3

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Brahma or the absolute continues for all time. But so long at least as *ajñāna* is there, the non-duality of the absolute cannot but be disturbed. Moreover, it is even doubtful whether *ajñāna* does ever come to an end. Even when the Vedāntic mystic has got the intuition of the absolute (*Brahma sākṣātkāra*), which is supposed to effect his freedom from the world, he does not cease to see the world or to be affected by any bodily feelings. It is contended that he has these experiences as the result of his past deeds which have begun to take effect (*prārabdha karma*). But since all deeds and their results are the work of *ajñāna*, if *ajñāna* really ceases with the rise of knowledge, all deeds with their results should disappear. The fact that they do not cease to have their effect even on the enlightened Vedāntist shows that *ajñāna* is not in fact cancelled by knowledge.

Thus we see that Vedāntism, which is not strictly compatible with theism, can support the theistic attitude of the popular mind only by sacrificing its main principles.

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RELATIONS IN MODERN INDIAN LOGIC

By Modern Indian Logic I do not mean the sort of Logic that is now-a-days taught in the modern Indian Universities. I mean by it the logic which is associated with the names of Gangeśa Upādhyāya and Raghunātha Śiromaṇi and which has been developed almost to its perfection by such later writers as Mathurānātha Tarkavagīśa, Jagadīśa Tarkalankāra and Gadādhara Bhāttachārya. There have been other distinguished writers on the subject but the writers named above are the best known among them and are still studied in different parts of India in all orthodox seats of Sanskrit learning.

The subject of relations is very important in Modern Indian Logic or *Navyanyāya* as it is called in Sanskrit. From the standpoint of *Navyanyāya* no proposition has any exact significanec unless we know in what relation the subject stands to the predicate. According to it, there is not much sense in merely saying that a thing is there or not there at a certain place, because by different relations the thing may be both there and not there at the same time. So we should understand by what different relations a thing may or may not exist at a certain place and in every case we should be clear about the relation involved in our assertion. *Navyanyāya* has been thus led to recognise all sorts of conceivable relations between one thing and another, understanding 'thing' in a very wide sense. I propose to explain in this paper some of the principal relations that are often used in *Navyanyāya* and also to give at the end some broad classifications of them.

We should realise first of all that relations constitute, as it were, the very backbone of logic. Logic is concerned with thought and thought is possible because there are things in relation. If there were only one thing in reality, or

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many things unrelated with one another, no thought would be possible. Thinking is essentially thinking 'together' of certain things and we can think of things as together only by asserting relations between them. There seems to be nothing essentially impossible in the idea of there being only one thing in reality or many things without any relation among them, but it seems impossible that we should be able to think of reality without implying some relation or other.

Relations cannot simply fall between the things that are related. Relations have no self-subsistence and cannot be conceived to have any being apart from the terms which are related by them. Even if they could exist apart, they would not then relate. Logicians generally, and especially the followers of *Navyanyāya*, are realists; they cannot accept the view that relations consist merely in the thinking activity of the mind. Relations have to be found somehow in the things that are related. Since a relation connects at least two terms, we might suppose that the relation exists in the whole constituted by its terms. But there is a difficulty in this view. If the relation between *a* and *b* existed in the whole of which *a* and *b* are the parts and if nothing further about the relation were known, if, that is, all that we knew about the being of the relation were that it existed in that whole, then we should be unable to distinguish the relation of *a* to *b* from the relation of *b* to *a*. For both the relations have the same sort of being and should be identical with one another. But if *a* is the father of *b*, *b* is not the father of *a* and so the relation of *a* to *b* should be distinct from the relation of *b* to *a*. Modern European Logic solves this difficulty by supposing that a relation has a 'sense' or direction.* The relation (father), which goes from *a* to *b*, is different from the relation (son) which goes from *b* to *a*.

* Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, p. 49

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Navyanyaya conceives the being of relations a little differently. If *a* is the father of *b*, then fatherhood is the relation which *a* bears to *b*. This relation has its being in *a* and refers to *b*. So *a* is the seat (*anuyogi*) of the relation and *b* is its correlate (*pratiyogi*). Sonship is the relation of *b* to *a* and of that relation *b* is the seat and *a* the correlate (what Russell calls *referrent* would be *anuyogi* in our terminology). When *a* has a relation to *b* or *b* has a relation to *a*, both of them are related and are to be called 'relata' (*sambandhi*) in each case, although in respect of any one of these relations, one of them is the seat (*anuyogi*) and the other the correlate (*pratiyogi*) of the relation. Thus a relation will not be completely determined unless we know what its terms are and how they are related. That is to say, in order to have an exact knowledge of a relation, we must not only know the terms related by it but must also know which of them is the seat and which the correlate of the relation.

The most obvious kind of togetherness or relation that we find in the world is that of actual contact between two substances. It is by this relation that a table may have a book upon it or there may be a pen in my hand. The table and the book may exist apart from each other but they are also brought into a relation when the book is placed on the table. the relation in this case is 'contact' (*saṃyoga*). Similarly in the case of my hand and the pen. As we say that there is a pen in my hand and not that there is my hand in the pen, we have to suppose that the seat of the contact is my hand and the pen is its correlate. Ordinarily if a thing exists anywhere by a relation, it exists where the relation has its seat. So if a pen is there in my hand it is because the relation which relates my hand and the pen has its seat (*anuyogi*) in my hand and the pen is its correlate. Thus also we find that the relation of my hand to the pen is not the relation of the pen to my hand.

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In some cases however the relation of contact relates both of its terms in the same sense. When, e.g., two sheep *a* and *b*, come in physical contact with one another, we may suppose that the contact of *a* with *b* is the contact of *b* with *a*, so that each of them happens to be the seat as well as the correlate of the relation which joins them. But as a rule the seat of a relation is not also its correlate.

There is a strange peculiarity about this relation and it will come out from the following consideration. When a monkey is seen on a branch of a tree, we may say that the tree has the relation of contact with the monkey. But the contact in question is not all over the tree, it is available only in a part of it, i.e., in one of its branches. There is no contact with the monkey at the root of the tree. We may say, therefore, that the tree is in contact, and is not in contact, with the monkey. Thus the relation of contact is compatible with its absence. Such is not the case with other relations. If somebody has the relation of brotherhood to me, we cannot say that there is also the absence of that relation in him. Not only is contact compatible with its absence, we have to go further and assert that its absence always goes with it. Only some parts of a thing can be in contact with another and some parts will always remain outside the contact. If every part of *x* were to be in contact with *y*, then *x* would merge in *y* and we should no longer say that *x* is in contact with *y*. So we say there is contact with regard to the part which is actually in contact and there is absence of contact in respect of the parts which remain outside the contact.

Contact is not merely a relation; it is also a quality. It is one among the twenty-four qualities accepted by the followers of *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*. Being a quality, it is available only between substances, because it is substances alone that can have any quality. By quality we do not mean

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here any abstract attribute that can be ascribed to anything. We mean by it only those qualities of which we are directly aware in external or internal perceptions, such as colour, smell, taste, etc., of physical things and knowledge, desire, etc., of the self. These are qualities in a sense in which the brightness of a colour or the character of being a quality is not a quantity. In any case, the *Naiyayikas* do not believe that anything except a substance can have a quality. So in their opinion, contact, which is a quality, is possible only in the case of substances.

From the fact that contact which is a quality is also a relation, it would appear that according to the *Naiyayikas* a relation as such need not be distinct from a quality.

The relation of a substance to its qualities is called *samavāya*. The term *samavāya* is generally translated as inherence. As qualities exist in a substance by the relation of *samavāya* and as we speak of qualities as inhering in a substance, so it is probably thought proper to call *samavāya* inherence. But the term inherence does not seem to bring out the full or the real significance of *samavāya*. Qualities exist in a substance by *samavāya*, because *samavāya* is the relation of the substance to its qualities. Just as a son is related to his father by the relation of fatherhood which the father bears in respect of his son, so are the qualities of a substance related to the substance by the relation of *samavāya* which the substance maintains with regard to its qualities. As we do not speak of a substance as inherent in its qualities, the relation of a substance to its qualities, which is *samavāya*, is not therefore inherence. Moreover, the idea of complete possession is implied in the term *samavāya*. If a substance has the relation of *samavāya* in respect of its qualities, it is because the qualities are so absolutely possessed by the substance that they have no being apart from it. The

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relation of a quality to a substance does not signify any such complete possession, because the substance may very well exist even when the quality disappears. The qualities, however, which exist by *samavāya* in any substance can never exist when the substance disappears.

This relation is not so obviously given in perception as the relation of contact. It is therefore necessary to prove that there is such a relation as *samavāya* ; and this is proved in the following simple way. We have experience of qualified substances, that is, we know from experience that there are qualities in a substance. And they can be there only by being related with the substance by some relation. We also find that qualities do not exist apart from a substance; so it appears that they must be essentially related with the substance. This relation is not contact, because contact is available only between substances and also because contact is never essential to the terms related by it. We therefore require a peculiar relation between a substance and its qualities which we call *samavāya*. The most important characteristic of this relation is that the terms related by it are not separately available. And it obtains wherever two terms are found in such close intimacy that one is not given apart from the other.

Just as the qualities (*guṇa*) of a substance are not available apart from the substance, so are its actions (*karma*). Therefore actions too are related to the substance which acts, by the relation of *samavāya*.

Similarly a whole (*avayavi*) is not given apart from its parts (*avayava*), a universal (*jāti*) is not found apart from its particular instances (*vyakti*). So the relation between whole and part, universal and particular, is *samavāya*. By this relation a whole resides in its parts and a universal resides in its particular instances.

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Samavāya is supposed to be eternal. It may sound strange that a relation should be called eternal, when its terms, substances and qualities, are liable to destruction. Still there is some point in saying that *samavāya* is eternal. *Samavāya* is not produced, like contact, by the action of one or more things. So, not being an effect (*karya*), it is not liable to destruction. We find only those things perish which, being positive, are the results of some action. *Samavāya* is not a thing of this kind. When we find that a quality is destroyed, we are apt to suppose that the relation by which it existed is also destroyed. But what we actually find in experience is only that the quality is destroyed and not that the relation is also destroyed.

The real point seems to be that as there are eternal entities, which either exist by this relation (e.g., universals) or maintain their attributes by this relation (e.g., souls), the relation has to be accepted as eternal. At least the relation has to be accepted as not later than the term which is related by it. *Samavāya* does not arise after a quality has come into being. When, therefore, we find that there are eternal entities which exist by this relation, we have *ipso facto* to accept that the relation is also eternal.

This relation is supposed to be one and the same in all different instances. The same contact does not join different pairs of things. The contacts are obviously different. But it is believed that the same *samavāya* relates all different terms which admit of this relation. We cannot detect any difference in the relation of *samavāya* as such. So we have to accept that it is the same relation which is present in different instances. The relation by which the universal character of cowhood resides in a cow is the very same relation by which the universal character of manhood resides in a man. And yet a man is not a cow, because although the relation is the same, the substrates

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and the attributes are different (*ādhārādheyaniyamāt*). The modern people however believe that the relation is different in different cases.*

The *Vaiśeṣikas* think that this relation is only an intelligible relation and is not given in any sense-experience. The *Naiyāyikas* however hold that just as we can perceive the absence of a thing, when the thing, the correlate (*pratiyogi*) of the absence, is perceivable, we can perceive *samavāya*, because its correlate too is perceivable. Since we can sensibly perceive a quality which exists by this relation and which is its correlate, we can also perceive the relation by sense-experience, the perceivability of a thing being always determined by the perceivability of its correlate, as we find in the case of absence. The absence of a spirit is not given in perception, because a spirit is not perceivable. But we can perceive the absence of a book, because its correlate, the book in question, is perceivable.

An interesting question is sometimes raised about the relation of this relation to its terms. In the case of contact, it is easy to understand that it is related to its terms by *samavāya*, because contact is a quality. But how is *samavāya* itself related? It cannot be related by contact, because contact is available only between substances; nor can it be related by *samavāya*, because *samavāya* being only one, we cannot have another *samavāya* to relate *samavāya* to its terms. *Praśastapāda* answers that *samavāya*, being a relation does not require a further relation to relate itself (*virttyātmakasya samavāyasya nānyā vrittirasti*). So it is related by itself (*tasmāt svātmavrittih*).

* "There is *samavāya* of smell in earth and not in water; so the *samavāya* is many, say the moderns."—*Dinakari*

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There is a characteristic relation by which things are related to time. All things in the world are related to time. In fact existence itself is sometimes defined in *Navyanyāya* as relatedness to time (*kāla sambandhitva*). This relation is expressed in such statements as: 'There is a book on the table *now*,' 'This flower was red in the *morning*,' 'I was going there *yesterday*,' etc. This relation cannot be one of contact, because contact is available only between substances, but we refer even quality (e.g., red) and action (e.g., going) to time and there cannot be any contact with them. This relation cannot also be *samavāya*, because the quality which is referred to a time does not exist by *samavāya* in time but only in the thing which possesses this quality. In the above instance, the quality red exists by *samavāya* only in the flower, which is red, and not in time. Yet the quality exists in time, although not by *samavāya*. It is borne in time by a particular relation which we may call 'time-relation' (*kālikasambandha*). By this relation all that exists at a particular time is related to that time. This is also the relation by which things exist in the all-comprehensive time.

What we have said above about time-relation is easy to understand, but it is a little difficult to grasp how this relation also obtains between any two things of the world that have temporal existence. Only eternal substances (except time) do not admit of this relation. But in any created thing (*janya*) anything else may exist by time-relation, provided, of course, both of them happen to exist at the same time. By this relation the fire in a mountain may be said to reside in the waters of a lake and the treasures of the king may lie in the hut of a beggar. When we say that one thing resides in another by time-relation, we do not simply mean that there is the relation of co-existence in time between them. Co-existence in time

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between two things would be a complex, indirect relation made up of the separate time-relations of the two things to time. But by their time-relation we mean a simple direct relation between them.

A relation is direct when it is brought about by one thing only. Contact is a direct relation, because one and the same contact relates two objects and nothing else than the simple contact is necessary for the relation. The relation of being a maternal uncle is not a direct relation, because in order to be related by it one requires a mother and then a brother to the mother. Now when two things exist at a time, they no doubt get related to each other and their relation is brought about by time only. Nothing else is required than the time in which they exist, to make them related. So their time-relation to each other is a simple direct relation.

I am not sure whether this interpretation brings out the real meaning of the time-relation as conceived by the *Naiyāyikas*; but some have actually given this interpretation. We may try a slightly different explanation.

The *Naiyāyikas* believe in an all-comprehensive, standing time (*mahākāla*) which is the support of every thing in existence. They also believe in an empirical time (*khaṇḍakāla*) which is of the nature of a process (*kriyātmaa*). This time is represented by things in process in the world. In fact when it is said that every created thing (*janyamātra*) is an attribute of time (*kālopadhi*) what seems to be meant is that empirical time is the process of the world, so that any particular time is nothing but all things at the time in process of change. So when it is said that a thing exists at a particular time it seems to be meant that it exists by time-relation in every thing that has at the time the temporal character of process or change. Empirical time is nothing but the changing things of the

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world, seeing that any particular time can only be determined by the states of such things. The eternal things (*nitya*) alone undergo no process and have no temporal character and so things do not reside in them by time-relation. Every thing else, which undergoes change, provides a fit locus for any thing in the world to exist by time-relation.

There is a peculiar relation called *svarūpa sambandha*, which for want of a more suitable term, I propose to translate as 'relation by proper being.' Let me explain what I mean by it. In a negative perceptual judgment, we localise the absence of a thing in a particular place. When I do not find any book on the table, I say 'There is no book on the table.' By this judgement I refer the absence of books to a particular place, namely, the surface of the table. The absence is, so to say, located in the table. But how is the absence related to the table? We cannot suppose that contact, *samavāya*, or any other like relation connects the absence with the table, for such relations are possible only between positive entities. On the other hand, we cannot deny all relations. We always find that a thing can be a locus (*ādhara*) of another only by maintaining some relation with it. Here the table is certainly the locus of the negative content, no-book; so the table must be in some relation with it. A little reflection will convince us that the table is enabled to become the locus of the absence of books by virtue of its own nature as something bare for the time being. When the surface of the table is empty, it becomes by its own nature or proper being (*svarūpa*) the locus of the negative content. The term *svarūpa* means one's own nature; and when we find that certain things by their peculiar nature become the locus of certain other things, we say that their relation to those other things is one of *svarūpa* or of proper being. In the above instance the bare character of the table is the

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relation of the table to the absence referred to it. Thus we say that a thing is related to another by its 'proper being' when nothing else is required to make the former the locus of the latter. This relation is not one of identity, because the properties of the table are not the properties of the negative content referred to it and so they cannot be identified. Moreover, here we are conceiving the table as the locus of a negative content; in the case of identity there is no question of one of the terms being the locus of the other.

This relation holds not only between a negative content and its locus (*adhāra* = the place where the content is referred), but also between anything and its property (*dharma*) when the property is found to reside in the thing by virtue of the proper being of the thing and not with the help of any third relation, such as contact, *samavāya*, etc. Thus, for instance, the property of knowability (*meyatva*) resides in a knowable object, not by virtue of a distinct relation but by virtue of the proper character of the object itself (*svarūpa*). When we cannot think of a distinct intermediary between a locus and what is referred to it, we suppose the proper being (*svarūpa*) of the locus is the relation of the locus to that which is referred to it. We have to accept it as a relation because without some relation we cannot explain our sense of one thing being resident in another.

There are two varieties of this relation that deserve special mention. These are the relations by spatiality (*daiśika viśesanata*) and temporality (*kalika viśesanata*). When we consider any material object in relation to the space occupied by it, we find that the space and the object are not two separate things, joined together by a third distinct relation. The space serves as the locus of the object simply by virtue of its own nature, i.e., spatiality. Similarly

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in the case of time. When an event or an object is referred to any particular time, the time in question becomes the locus of the object simply by its own proper character as time (temporality). What relates an object to its time or space is not anything other than the character of time or the character of space. So we say that objects are related to space and time by the proper being (*svarūpa*) of space and time.

Every thing is related to itself by identity (*tādātmya*). There may be some doubt as to whether we should at all have a relation like identity, seeing that in all cases of relation we have at least two things to be related while in the present case we have one thing only. The necessity of such a relation will be evident from the following consideration. We think that a proposition of the form 'A is not A' cannot be true. But it can be false only if it can be validity contradicted by another proposition, which can only be 'A is A.' Thus for the falsity of the proposition 'A is not A', we require a valid proposition of the form 'A is A'. In this proposition the predicate, A, has to be related to the subject, A, and the only relation possible here is that of identity.

Knowledge (*jñāna*), will (*kṛti*) and desire, positive or negative (*icchā* or *dveṣa*) are intelligible only as referring to some objects. They are related to their objects by the relation of objective reference (*viśayitā*) or the relation of having an object. The objects of knowledge, will or desire are related to the knowledge, will or desire by their objectivity (*viśayitā*).

The objective reference (*viśayitā*) of a knowledge is not intelligible by itself; there is no such thing as mere objective reference. It is intelligible only as relating to a particular object. Similarly the objectivity of a thing is intelligible only in respect of a particular knowledge which

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has objective reference to it. So we say that the objective reference (*viśayita*) of a knowledge is determined (*nirūpita*) by the objectivity of the thing, to which the knowledge refers. We say therefore that the objectivity of the thing which is known in a particular knowledge, has the relation of being a determinant (*nirūpaka*) in respect of the objective reference contained in the knowledge. Viewed in this aspect, the objective reference in knowledge has the relation of being determined (*nirūpita*) with regard to the objectivity of the thing known. We may take any pair of relative terms and we shall find that the relation of determinant and determined is present there. Such pairs are son and father, husband and wife, etc. If A is B's son then the sonship of A is determined by the fatherhood of B. This relation of determinant and determined is symmetrical. If the sonship of A is determined by the fatherhood of B, the fatherhood of B is determined by the sonship of A.

A determinandum (*viśeṣya*) is that which is characterised by a determinans (*viśeṣaṇa*). In every determinate knowledge we find that there is a determinandum as well as a determinans which in a proposition assume the forms of subject (*uddeśya*) and predicate (*vidheya*). These terms are intelligible only in reference to each other and so each is determined by the relation of the other. A term has the relation of being a determinandum (*viśeṣyata*) to that which characterises it and which has, in respect of it, the relation of being a determinans (*viśeṣanata*). The property of being a determinandum (*viśeṣyata*) belongs to the object to be determined by virtue of its own proper being, i.e., the relation of the property to the object is that of proper being or *svarūpa*.

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The number or the numerical quality of a group of things resides in the group taken together by a relation different from that by which it resides in each member. Number, being a quality, resides in the objects which possess this quality, by *samavāya*. But although each of them may share in the quality by *samavāya*, each by itself is not sufficient to have the quality (number). So we conceive of a relation called sufficiency (*paryāpti*) by which a group of things may exhaustively possess any property referred to them. Bothness (*ubhayatva*), e.g., resides in two members of a group, constituted by two things, by the relation of sufficiency, although it exists in each by *samavāya*. When we know two or more things in an act of knowledge, the objectivity, defined by this knowledge, resides in them all by the relation of sufficiency, because it is only when we have taken account of all those things that we can say that they are sufficient for, or exhaust, the objectivity of that knowledge. This relation too is a variety of the relation by proper being (*svarūpa*), for the sufficiency of a number of things is not any thing other than the things themselves.

We have already learnt of one sort of correlation (*pratiyogitā*). The correlate we have known is a relatum (*sambandhi*) in respect of a relation and is different from the seat (*anuyogi*) of the relation. There is another sort of correlation which is to be understood in regard to a negation. A negation is intelligible only in relation to that which is negated and which is therefore called the correlate of the negation. When we say 'There is no book on the table,' the term book is the correlate of the negation (i.e., negative content) asserted in the proposition. Thus the relation of being a correlate (*pratiyogitā*) is maintained by a term both with regard to the relation which refers to it (but which does not reside in it) and with regard to the negation which denies it. If A is the father of B, B is the

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correlate of the relation of fatherhood maintained by A, and so B has the relation of being a correlate (*pratiyogitā*) in respect of the relation fatherhood, residing in A. Of this relation, viz., that of being a correlate, B is the seat (*anuyogi*) and the relation fatherhood, in respect of which it holds, is the correlate (*pratiyogi*). The case is similar with the correlate of a negation also.

There is a very important relation which may be called the relation of a defining character (*avacchedakata*). By a defining character we mean a character which marks out a thing from everything else. When we say 'There is no cow in the room,' we have the instance of a negation of which the correlate is the cow or whose correlation is defined by the character of cowhood. Cowhood has the relation of a defining character (*avacchedakata*) with regard to the correlation (*pratiyogitā*) implied in this negation. Negations are different when their correlates are different and the correlates are different when their defining characters are different.

But sometimes a correlate is not made quite definite by the mention of its defining character. When we say 'There is no cow in the room' we may mean either that no cow is there in contact with the floor of the room or that the room does not possess any cow by *samavāya* (i.e., no cow is inherent in the room). The two negations, one implying the relation of contact and the other that of *samavāya*, are different, because even when there is a cow in contact with the room, it will be right to say that there is no cow in the room in the sense that the room has no cow inherent in it. The body of a cow, a whole, exists by *samavāya*, i.e., is inherent, only in its parts and it cannot so exist in anything else. But the correlates of these negations have the same defining character of cowhood and so from this alone we do not know which of the two negations is really meant in the assertion. So in order to

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make the correlate absolutely definite, we need to mention the defining relation also. When it is said that there is no cow in the room, what is ordinarily meant is that there is no cow in contact with the floor of the room. So the correlate of the negation in this case is defined by the character of cowhood and by the relation of contact. Thus when in plain language we say there is no cow, we are asserting in logical terminology, a negation (*abhāva*) whose correlation (*pratiyogita*) is defined by the character of cowhood (*gotvāvacchinna*) and by the relation of contact (*saṃyoga-sambandhāvacchinna*). Similarly other logical terms and relations are made exact by the use of defining characters and relations.

We have seen that in the negation of cow, the correlation in respect of the negation is marked by the defining character of cowhood. Cowhood has thus, in respect of the correlation, the property (or the relation) of being a defining character (*avacchedakatā*). But what is it to be defining character? Sometimes it is said to be co-extensiveness (*anātikṭaurittitva*). Cowhood is the defining character of the correlation in the above instance, because it is found wherever the correlation of the negation is found, i.e., because it is co-extensive with the correlation. All cows in the world are the correlate of the negation 'There is no cow.' In them all there is correlation and also the character of cowhood. Hence cowhood is the defining character of the correlation.

Or we may suppose that cowhood comes to be regarded as the defining character only by being regarded in certain aspect of its proper being. Its property of being a defining character is nothing but a certain species of its relation by proper being (*svārūpasambandhaviśeṣa*). There is some difference in these two conceptions, and it sometimes leads to certain difficulties when the concept

of a defining character is used without any further determination. But we need not pursue the topic any further here.

We may now attempt to explain some broad classifications of relations that are often met with in *Navyanyāya*.

1. Relations may be classified as separable and inseparable. In the case of a separable (*yutasiddha*) relation, the terms suffer no change in their being when they are out of the relation. The relation of contact is a relation of this sort. A table and a book may be in contact with each other but they may also be separated without any prejudice to their being. But the relation of *samavāya* is an inseparable relation, for a quality or an action, which exists by *samavāya* in a substance, has no being apart from this relation. (Separable and inseparable relations are roughly similar to external and internal relations of Western philosophy.)

2. Relations may be pervasive (*vyāpyavritti*) or non-pervasive (*avyāpyavritti*). A relation is pervasive when it refers to the whole of the term related by it and it is non-pervasive when it refers only to a part of it. The relation of *samavāya* is pervasive. When a substance has a quality by this relation, relation is understood in respect of the whole of the substance and it is of the whole substance that the quality is predicated. But the relation of contact is non-pervasive. We have already explained how contact refers only to a part, and not to the whole, of the thing related by it. A non-pervasive relation is always compatible with its absence.

3. Some relations are existential (*vrittiniyamaka*) in the sense that they regulate or control the being of things related by them; and others are not so (*vrittinyaniyamaka*).

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If something is related by contact, *samavāya* or proper being (*svārūpa*), we know it must exist where the relation exists. A thing related by contact must exist at the place of contact. A quality must inhere in the object which has the relation of *samavāya* to it. But the riches of a man which are related to him by the relation of ownership (*svamitva*) may not exist where the man exists. The seat of the relation, ownership, is the man but his riches are not lying upon him. Indeed they may lie a thousand miles away from him and still they will be his by virtue of his relation to them. Similarly the relation of objective reference (*viśayita*) by which knowledge is related to its object does not determine the locus of the object. The object need not exist where the relation exists, *i.e.*, in knowledge which inheres in the self. We never conceive of knowledge or of the self as the locus of the object related to knowledge by objective reference. In fact, the terms which are related by non-existential relations, are only *relata* (*sambandhi*), and the relation of locus and what is located (*locatum*?) (*adharadheyabhāva*) does not hold good of them at all. Since by an existential relation we mean a relation which determines the place where a thing related by it exists, the seat of such a relation (*anuyogi*) is also the locus of the correlate (*pratiyogi*) of the relation.

4. Relations may be classified as direct (*sakṣat*) and indirect (*parampara*). A relation is direct when in the being of the relation no other relation is implied. Contact is a direct relation but the relation of having the same locus (*samanadhikaranya*) is an indirect relation inasmuch as it implies two terms which are separately related by contact or otherwise to the same locus. The relation of being a husband is a direct relation; but the relation of being a maternal uncle is an indirect relation as it involves the relations of brotherhood and motherhood.

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(as reviewed by Pārthasārathi Miśra)

The principle of generalisation seems to be essential to knowledge. In fact all true knowledge that is not simply confined to momentary sense-experience proceeds on the basis of some universal relations and seeks to establish propositions which are universal in their character. At least our thought would have no scope unless it could rely upon some universal elements and connexions in knowledge. Universal connexion is the soul of inference. This finds expression in a general proposition with which deduction starts and at which induction seeks to arrive. Indian philosophy, which does not recognize any sharp distinction between induction and deduction, makes universal connexion the basis of all inference. Now the question arises, what is the nature of this universal connexion and how is this established or proved to be valid? Different views are held about these questions. Parthasarathi Miśra, who occupies an important place among the Mīmāṃsakas of the Bha-tta school, has discussed these views and given his answers in his work *Nyāyaratnamālā*. There is nothing very startling in the views he has expressed but he appears to have dealt with all important considerations which are relevant on the subject and with which modern discussions have made us familiar.

Now the nature of the universal relation which enables us to infer from the presence of one of two related terms the existence of the other has been, as we have just said, conceived differently by different philosophers. Some, e.g., the followers of Kanāda, think that this relation is not always

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of one sort only. It is sometimes the relation of कार्यकारणभाव (cause and effect), sometimes of contact (संयोग), or inherence (समवाय) or inhering in the same substance (एकार्थ समवाय). If we know that two terms are causally related, or that one is in contact with the other, or that one inheres in the other or that both of them inhere in the same substance, then we can easily infer from the presence of one the presence of the other. The relation may sometimes be even of विरोध (opposition) when of course we can infer from the presence of one term the absence of the other.

The Bauddhas conceive of the universal relation as concomitance (अविनाभाव). If two terms are related in such a way that one cannot be had without the other, the relation of concomitance is said to subsist between them. When we know that there is such concomitance between two things we can then with confidence pass from the existence of one to the existence of the other. But how is this concomitance made possible? The Bauddhas answer that if two things are such that one forms part of the nature of the other (तत्त्वभाष्य) or originates from it, (तदुत्पत्ति) then the required relation of concomitance is possible between them.

The Mimāṃsakas think of the universal relation as mere regularity (नियमरूपम्) which may appear under different forms in different circumstances.

These are some of the different ways in which the nature of the universal relation has been conceived. Now, how do we know that there is ever such a universal relation between any two terms? The Bauddhas content themselves by saying that the fact that one forms part of the nature of the other or originates from it, is itself a sufficient reason why the relation of concomitance should be there between them. Others say that we know universal relations by perception; according to some by internal perception (मानसप्रत्यक्ष); according to others by sense-perception

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(ऐन्द्रियकम्). Of the last who maintain sense-perception as the source of our knowledge of the universal relation of concomitance, some think that the first perception (प्राथमिकम्) is enough, while others think that it is the last perception (भूयोदर्शनसहायं चरमप्रत्यक्षम्) as strengthened by many previous perceptions, which gives us the knowledge of universal concomitance. Others again think that by अथापत्ति ('hypothetical reasoning') we come to know of it. The Mimāṃsakas say that we arrive at our knowledge of universal concomitance only when we have observed many cases in which it holds good and no case has been found in which it fails भूयांस्येव तद्दर्शनानि व्यभिचारादर्शन सहायानि.

Now if we accept the Vaiśeṣika view of the universal relation as only that of cause and effect, or of contact, inherence and the rest, which they have enumerated, it will be impossible for us to infer the rise of Rohiṇī from the rise of Kṛttikā, for none of the above relations holds between them. The rise of Rohiṇī and the rise of Kṛttikā are not causally related nor is the relation between them one of contact, inherence or of inhering in the same substance or even of opposition. It cannot be maintained that when we have said that they are related we have included all relations; for relation is generally understood in the sense either of contact or of inherence. If however, it is still contended that all relations are meant to be included in the idea of relation and not those of contact and inherence only, then why should the relation of cause and effect as well as some others be specially and separately mentioned when they are all equally available from the idea of mere relation. Moreover, if the relation of cause and effect justified us in drawing an inference, then we should infer smoke from fire, since the relation of cause and effect subsists between them. If merely the relation of inhering in the same substance were sufficient, we might infer that a particular object is a Śiṃśapā simply from the

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fact that it is a tree, for tree-hood and Śimśapā-hood inhere in the same substance. These inferences, if drawn, would be absolutely wrong. It should be observed that we can validly infer fire from smoke, and from the fact that a particular object is a Śimśapā, we can safely say that it is a tree. But as there are cases of fire where there is no smoke and there are trees which are not Śimśapā, our inference of smoke from fire or of an object being a Śimśapā from its being a tree is clearly wrong. Because we are able to say that wherever there is smoke there is fire, whatever is a Śimśapā is a tree, our inference of fire from smoke, or of tree-hood from Śimśapā-hood is correct. So what justifies the inference is not any particular relation of cause and effect or of inhering in the same substance but simply the regularity of concomitance. The Mimāṃsakas therefore say that whatever may be the relation between two terms, if one of them is known to go regularly with other, then from the presence of it we can infer the presence of the other. It is in this way that we infer from smoke in the sky the presence of fire not far from it, from the rise of the moon the rise of tide in the sea.

Now how do we know—what is the proof—that there is such regularity? The Bauddhas say that the fact that something is the cause, or an essential property, of something else shows that there is such a determinate regular connexion between them. (The same story was repeated by Mill who thought that causation is the basis of induction). But if the ground of a general proposition is to be sought in causation, then a general proposition should not be admissible where the relation of cause and effect is not found. The uniform regular relation between the rise of Krittikā and that of Rohiṇī will therefore have to be denied. Moreover, what is causation itself? पौर्वापर्यनियम एव कार्यकारणभावः. It is nothing but the uniform relation of sequence. When we are seeking some rational basis of

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uniform relation itself, some uniform relation will not serve our purpose. कथं च नियम एव नियमे प्रमाणम् ? We can never say that uniform relation is the basis of uniform relation. आत्माश्रयदोषापत्तेः. This will involve us in the fallacy of *ātma śraya*. (Mr. Russell has made us familiar with this criticism of the Inductive Principle) Again, how do we know that anything is the effect or an essential property of something also? Perception can only show us साहित्यमात्रम्, that is, that two things are together, but न तत्कार्यता तत्स्वभावता वा, that is, not that one is the effect or an essential property of another. It may be said that when we invariably find fire where there is smoke and do not find smoke where there is no fire, we understand that smoke is an effect of fire. But that is to go beyond what is given in perception. By perception we can only ascertain the अस्तित्वा, (existence) or the नास्तित्व (non-existence) of a thing. It exists where we find it; it does not exist where we do not find it. That it is an effect is nowhere seen. So the relation of cause and effect itself has no rational basis and cannot therefore be the rational basis of something else.

The idea of essential property is also of little help in this connexion. Even though a particular object is seen to possess a particular nature or intrinsic property, it will give us no ground for arriving at a general rule. For the intrinsic nature or property of a thing goes only with the particular thing (तन्मात्रानुबन्धित्वात्तत् स्वभावतायाः) to which it is intrinsic; there is no proof that all such objects will possess this property. The fact that we have nowhere found a particular object without a particular property cannot remove the doubt that the object in question may somewhere be found without the particular property. We cannot therefore derive a general rule from the nature of a thing. (This criticism seems to hold good *mutatis mutandis* against the position of Bosanquet also.)

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Some people think that we come to know of general rules by mental intuition or internal perception. But this view is open to the fatal objection that such perception can inform us about things that go on in the mind and is powerless to tell us anything about objective general rules which are certainly more extensive in their scope than any psychical fact perceived by the mind.

Some are therefore led to believe that we arrive at general rules by sense-perception. By perception we know the relation between smoke and fire which is देशकालानवच्छिन्न, that is, without any spatial and temporal qualification, and which is therefore universal. It may be said that by perception we know the relation between smoke and fire at some particular place and time ; that is, it is the relation between this smoke and this fire which is known and not some universal relation. But this-ness is a qualification of things which are related and not also of the relation, which, thus being not limited to any particular time and place, is universal.

But the evidence of our experience goes, directly against this view. We know that things were related, they are related and will be related. The time-qualifications undoubtedly refer to the relation itself. The tenses must qualify something. Things are not qualified by them. So it must be the relation between them which is the object of their qualification. Even if we do not know any qualification of some relation which a thing bears to some other thing, we cannot know for certain that the relation is inherent in the nature of the thing, and that it will always stand in this relation. For some qualifying condition, अवच्छेद, may be there which we have failed to detect. नहि अवच्छेदानवगममात्रेण तदभावावधारणं सिध्यति. We cannot say that a thing does not exist simply

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because we do not know it. Even if there is no qualifying condition, still the relation cannot be known to be intrinsic to the nature of the thing. For the relation of thing to the present instant is obviously without any qualifying condition but the relation to the present instant is never intrinsic to the nature of the thing, because the thing is available even in the past or future when its relation to the present is altogether absent.

So when we find that even an unconditional connexion is sometimes liable to change, we cannot be sure that the unconditionality of the relation of smoke to fire is a sufficient guarantee for its being universal. Even though we have never seen a case in which the connexion of smoke with fire has failed, the doubt that it may, at some other time and place, fail, cannot be removed. That it will never fail cannot be established by perception which is confined to here and now. Inference will not help, for inference is based on universality. It cannot be maintained that the relation will not fail because it is intrinsic to the nature of the thing. For, in the first place, we do not know how to determine what is intrinsic to anything. It may be said that what is unconditional (अनौपाधिक) is essential. But how do we know that anything is unconditional? The fact that we do not *know* any condition does not prove that *there is really* no condition. And, moreover, we have seen that even what is unconditional, e.g., the relation to time, is not essential. Secondly, who can guarantee that the intrinsic nature of a thing does not change?

Further we only observe particular facts and from them we cannot pass on to another fact which has not come under our observation. (Cf. Bradley's criticism of Mill's position that we reason from particulars to particulars). The relation we have observed in the several

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facts examined may not exist in the new fact which is different from them.

It may be maintained (as, e.g. Hobhouse maintains against Bradley's criticism) that the relation which serves as the basis of inference is not the relation of particulars as such but of some universal elements in the particulars. The relation of smoke and fire which justifies an inference is not a relation of particular smokes and particular fires in their particularity but of smoke and fire as such—as universals.

But nowhere do we find universals as such related to each other. We only find relation between particulars, e.g., between some particular smoke and particular fire. If the universals are to be related, they can be related only through particulars. The particular, therefore, is a condition of the relation of the universals. This being so, when the particular becomes different, the relation also may become different.

Others seek to maintain the perceptual character of our knowledge of universal relations in an indirect way. When we have observed, they say, in a large number of instances that smoke is invariably related to fire, we get the notion that smoke is universally related to fire. This notion is not wrong, because it is verified in experience. Our knowledge, therefore, of universal relations is valid knowledge and has to be referred to some one of the recognized sources of such knowledge. The source is neither inference (अनुमिति) nor hypothesis (अर्थापत्ति) because both of them are based on it. It is obviously neither word (शब्द) nor analogy (उपमिति) nor a non-apprehension (अनपलब्धि). So it must be perception. The fact that a universal relation is not known in the first instance does not show that it is

not perceptual, for previous experience is a condition of many cases of valid perception. (Psychology of perception shows that even our ordinary perception is conditioned by previous experience). It may be objected that perception, which has its scope confined to the present only, cannot have for its object a general rule which extends to all times and places. But it is pointed out that a general rule does not so much express the temporal and spatial extension of any relation as the intrinsic nature of the thing related. A general rule to the effect that smoke is universally related to fire only means that it is the nature of smoke to be so related. So just as we perceive a wall as stable (स्थिर) which implies its existence beyond the present moment, so do we perceive a general rule.

Against this position Pārthasārathi maintains that perception can take in only what is present and the nature of a general rule is such that it goes beyond the present and, as such, cannot be perceived. Even if we grant that a general rule only expresses the nature of a thing we cannot admit that it is *perceived* as such. For any characteristic can be known as the nature of something only when it never fails and that it never fails can never be an object of perception. The perception of a wall as stable is a mere fiction. If 'stable' means 'existing for some time beyond the present' or 'capable of such existence', the knowledge of anything as stable cannot be derived from mere perception but from inference or from perception as strengthened by recognition which is based on memory.

Lastly, one may suppose that the universality of a relation of a thing to another only means that the relation is 'natural' to the thing and not that it extends to all time. स्वामाविकत्व सबन्धस्य नियमः नत कालान्तरसबन्धः When we say that smoke is universally related to fire, we mean that this relation

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forms part of the nature of smoke. The nature of a thing being something present may very well be apprehended by perception.

But what is 'natural'? If what is dependent on the nature of a thing is natural to it, then this relation of fire to smoke would also be natural, for this relation depends upon the nature of fire. If it is said that what depends solely upon the nature of a thing is natural to that thing, then the relation of fire to smoke will not, of course, be natural, inasmuch as it depends also upon 'wet fuel', but the relation of smoke to fire would not be natural, because it is dependent not only upon smoke but also upon fire. Thus we find that perception can never be the source or basis of our knowledge of a universal rule.

Some thinkers try to validate our knowledge of universal relations by 'hypothetical reasoning.' They say if smoke were not universally related to fire, it would not invariably be found to go with it ; some exception would surely be somewhere found. But although we may find fire, where there is smoke and no smoke where there is no fire, we cannot thereby establish or maintain that wherever there is smoke there is fire, or that wherever there is no fire there is no smoke.

What, then, is the basis of a determinate universal relation? It is obvious that there must be some general rules; otherwise no inference would be possible. But it is evident that no universal connexions can be proved by experience which is confined to particular facts only. It is also true that we cannot go beyond experience. We have therefore to modify our conception of universal connexions. If a universal connexion is to be based on experience, it cannot cover all times and places, clearly because they

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cannot be encompassed in individual experiences. So we have to understand the universality of a connexion as limited to the extent of our experience. It is universal as far as our experience goes. It cannot be universal in the sense of covering instances of which we have no experience. In point of fact it is on the basis of such a universal connexion that inference is generally made. When we have repeatedly observed the conjunction of two facts which has never been found to fail, we feel justified in inferring from the presence of one the presence of the other. The basis of universal connexion understood in this sense is therefore repeated experience coupled with non-observance of any exception.

Now if the universal connexion is true only so far as our experience goes, then on the basis of it, we cannot make any inference which will be absolutely certain, that is free from all doubts. For there will always remain the doubt that the so-called universal connexion may fail in some instance of which we yet do not know. Pārthasārathi seems to be aware of this fact and recognizes some element of doubt in most of our inferences. He believes, however, that this doubt can be removed by the accumulation of experience and testimony of others. But the element of doubt can only be indefinitely diminished but cannot be altogether eliminated. If Pārthasārathi admits this, as I think he should, his views will not be very different from the modern views on the subject as we find them expressed in the writings of Mr. Russell, Dr. W.E. Johnson and others.

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APPENDICES

Fact and Fiction

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Students of philosophy are familiar with the distinction between reality and appearance. The idea of appearance is very prominent in the philosophy of Bradley. It is present even in certain types of modern realism in which a distinction is made between *sensa* and the things known through them. In Vedantism too the idea of appearance is very important inasmuch as it expresses for it the character of the world as opposed to the ultimate reality. We propose to examine in this paper the idea of appearance and see whether it can be used as a valid metaphysical category. It will probably be enough for our purpose to study the notion (of appearance) as used in the systems of thought referred to above.

The fact of illusion primarily gives rise to the idea of appearance as distinguished from that of reality. Whenever there is an illusion we are presented with an appearance which does not correspond to the thing to which the appearance is referred. But an appearance need not always be illusory. In veridical perceptions things are believed to appear just as they are, and in these cases we may suppose that appearances are real appearances. But as from the cases of illusion we see that the being of a thing may be different from its appearance, we come to form the idea of appearance as distinguished from, though not necessarily contrasted with, that of reality. The term 'appearance' has thus come to stand for that which is given in knowledge with no assurance as to whether or not it is real in fact.

The idea of appearance however has not got exactly the same significance in different systems. For the Vedanta the category of appearance covers up the entire sphere of knowable universe. It is all appearance and stands in sharp

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contrast to the absolute (Brahma) which alone is real and which negates all empirical existence. Here the relation between appearance and reality is that of opposition. The truth of reality shines when the falsity of appearance has come to be recognised.

On the opposite pole stand the realists. They do not as a rule use the term appearance; their favourite expression is sense-datum or sensum, although Mr. Reid has suggested the word appearance for it. (*Knowledge and Truth*, p. 141). A sensum is that which is given in a sense-perception as distinguished from the act of perceiving. The realists believe in the reality of physical objects. But the physical objects are to be distinguished from sensa. So sensa may very well be conceived as appearances in which real objects appear to us, but there is no suggestion that these appearances (sensa) are not real. In fact according to some realists sensa are the ultimate elements of reality out of which various physical objects are constructed. Those who believe that sensa are only logical essences do not of course think that sensa exist; but they do not by any means suggest that sensa are not real. They are real in the world of subsistence and may be considered as a sort of eternal objects.

Bradley strikes a middle path. Although he condemns appearance as too full of contradictions to be wholly real, he protests vigorously against the idea that appearances are not real at all. He thinks that appearances, though in themselves falling short of reality, are retained as transformed and harmonised in the absolute. The absolute of Bradley comprehends and retains all appearances whereas the absolute of the Vedanta rejects and negates them all. Unlike however the sensa of the realists, the appearances of Bradley are not real in their own right.

By Bradley and the Vedanta the idea of appearance is applied to that which cannot stand the test of reality.

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According to Bradley non-contradiction or harmony is the test of reality. But the world as conceived in terms of thought is found to be infected with self-discrepancy. According to the Vedanta ultimate reality belongs to that which does not depend on another for its manifestation. It is the pure subject alone which shines by its own light and is not dependent upon anything else for its manifestation. The world comes to us in the form of an object and as such it lacks the principle of self-manifestation. It is only in the knowing consciousness of the subject that an object as object realises its being. Pure subjectivity or consciousness being the ultimate nature of reality, the world of objects can only have the status of a false appearance.

It is not our purpose here to examine the validity of the different arguments which Bradley and the Vedanta have used in order to show that the world of everyday thought and experience is an appearance. Our immediate object is to examine whether the idea of appearance itself is a valid metaphysical idea. By a metaphysical idea we understand an idea which can be applicable to reality.

It may be objected here that both Bradley and the Vedanta do not profess to apply the notion of appearance to reality. What meaning is there then in examining it as an idea applicable to reality?

In answer to this objection we have to point out that although the idea of appearance is not applied to reality, in their sense of the term, both Bradley and the Vedanta have made use of the term appearance in order to signify certain actual facts by it. If the idea of appearance did not stand for any fact in reality, it would be an empty idea devoid of all meaning. Therefore the idea of appearance must have been used with a view to express some aspect of reality in some sense. We wish only to consider whether

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it can stand for any intelligible aspect of reality. That some part or aspect of reality was sought to be covered by the idea of appearance is evident from the fact that both Bradley and the Vedanta deny that an appearance is absolutely nothing. It is not altogether unreal. In almost identical terms they ask 'if an appearance were nothing, how could it appear?'

But if appearance is not unreal, why is it not identified with reality? It is not identified with reality because it cannot stand the test of reality. So it is found necessary to conceive of appearance as different from both reality and unreality. But can we really conceive of a third something which is neither real nor unreal. The Vedanta gives us the instance of an illusory object in order to facilitate our understanding of this concept. According to the Vedanta an illusory object is neither real nor unreal. It is not real, because it actually disappears when the illusion disappears and is negated in the correcting judgment. It is not also altogether unreal, because if it were completely unreal, it should not be seen at all. We cannot see an object which is not there. The illusory object is not even a mental idea, because an idea has never an external appearance. So the Vedanta maintains that there can be a thing which is neither real nor unreal and which may therefore be called indescribable.

Bradley tries to solve this difficulty of conceiving appearance as different from both absolute reality and complete unreality by his doctrine of the degrees of reality. Nothing in the world is, according to him, absolutely real or unreal. There is more or less of reality in everything in the world. An appearance is thus more or less real according to the degree of its freedom from self-contradiction.

But can we really accept either the Vedantic view that there is an indescribable kind of being which is neither

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real nor unreal or the solution of Bradley that there are only degrees of reality? We find it impossible to conceive of different kinds of being ; being as such must be of one sort only. Things differ in their specific characters, but they never differ, if they are real, in their being. So we cannot think of two kinds of being, one real and the other illusory. Illusory being is no being at all. If it is asked 'if an illusory object is not, how is it that it is seen at all?' we have to say that it is the very characteristic of illusion that in it we seem to see things which are not there. No further metaphysical account can be given of an illusory object.

The same difficulties present themselves in connexion with degrees of reality. There can be more or less of a thing that admits of quantitative measurement. There can be more or less of height or weight or any other measurable character which a thing may possess; but if a thing is real, it must possess being in the absolute sense. Our idea of being is simple and unanalysable; it must be either affirmed or denied. There is no *via media* between reality and unreality. If a thing does not satisfy our test of reality, the only legitimate conclusion that we can draw is that it is not real at all. Hence we see that the idea of appearance as neither real nor unreal or as real in varying degrees is a spurious idea.

When we come to consider appearance as *sensum*, we find ourselves faced with similar difficulties. We know that a *sensum* is defined as that which appears in a sense-perception as distinguished from the act of perceiving, and we shall presently see that it is impossible to find a suitable metaphysical status for all *sensa* as such. A *sensum* can be either physical or mental or logical; we cannot think of a fourth alternative. But a *sensum* as such cannot be physical, because in the place of a round physical thing, we are sometimes presented with an elliptical *sensum* and it is impossible to identify the two. It

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cannot be mental, because what is mental never has an external appearance. It cannot also be logical, for a logical entity is never found confined to a particular time and place, and a sensum is certainly referred to a particular time and place.

The difficulty arises from the fact that sensum is present (i. e. there is a sensuous appearance) in illusion as well as in veridical perception. The appearance in veridical perception can very well be identified with the object of perception. The object being real, the appearance is also real. But in illusion the appearance or the sensum is certainly different in its proper character from the object which is actually present before the percipient subject. Without such objective consideration a veridical perception cannot be distinguished from an illusion. But both in veridical perception and in illusion the sensum as sensum has absolutely the same character. Merely as contents of sense there is nothing to distinguish an illusory object from a real one. The snake of illusion as well as the snake of veridical perception has the same appearance of a real snake. But metaphysically there is the greatest of difference between an illusory appearance and a real one. In veridical perception the appearance or the sensum is real, being identical with the object before the perceiver. But in illusion the sensum is merely a false appearance which cannot in its proper character be identified with anything real in the world. The idea of a snake in the mind of the percipient subject or the existence of a real snake somewhere else in the world cannot lend any real being to the illusory snake which is seen in an illusion. The sensum (in illusion) as qualified by its attributed position in time and space cannot at all be found in reality. Thus it is clear that a sensum is sometimes real and sometimes unreal. But since there is nothing common between reality and unreality, it is impossible to find a common metaphysical status for all sensa as such.

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For the purpose of this paper we have assumed that there are veridical perceptions as well as illusions, and since *sensa* are present in both, we have maintained, we cannot give a common ontological character to all *sensa* as such. But it may be argued that there is nothing in a perception as such to show whether it is veridical or illusory and as, therefore, we do not know whether in any perception we have got a real object or not, we have to start our metaphysical speculation about the world only with *sensa* and construct real objects out of them.

But how should we think of these *sensa*? As we cannot think of anything as neither real nor unreal, we have to think of *sensa* as either real or unreal. If they are unreal, we cannot do the work of our construction with them; nothing can be constructed out of unreal entities. If they are real, what is the use of further construction when we have got reality already in them? Besides if *sensa* as such were all real, there would be no illusion, as every perception would have its own real object. But can we truly think of them as real? Mutually conflicting *sensa*, such as yellow and white, round and elliptical, are referred to one and the same place and it is impossible that they should all be real.

The idea of *sensum* may be useful, in epistemology, as standing for the common object of sense-perception, before the distinction of truth and falsity has yet arisen. But the distinction is bound to arise. We may differ as to what tests should be used in order to distinguish a right perception from a wrong one. But there is no doubt or difference of opinion as regards the fact that some perceptions are right and some perceptions are wrong, and all perceptions are not equally right or equally wrong. Such distinction of rightness and wrongness, made by whatever tests, is significant only by an objective reference. There is nothing right or wrong merely in seeing. It is the

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Every man is a member of a family; he is in certain relations to the other members of the family. He is what his family has made him, although, according to his capacity, he too contributes something to the total character of the family. He is a father or a son or something else. And the total character of his manhood, of his life and thought, would not be understood if his fatherhood or sonship were not taken into consideration. When a man is a father, he stands in a particular relation to some other member or members of his family and fulfils certain characteristic functions. This relation and these functions colour the whole being of the man. He would be a fiction and not the man he is, if he were conceived apart from his relation and functions. He belongs also to larger social and political groups, and very often to some religious community as well. His membership of these groups does not leave his being altogether unaffected. He has inherited a civilisation which has an individuality of its own. He is the product of an historical movement at a particular stage of its evolution. If the concrete reality of a man is to be understood, if, that is, we are to know him as he really is, we have to view him in these and many other aspects. The life of a man is always displayed in a definite historical and geographical setting; and when abstracted from such a setting, his character would at best be an enigma or a mystery. In fact it would be fiction which can never be found in reality.

We see therefore that like a thing-in-itself, a man in himself is never to be found. Even those who drift away from their social and political moorings and take to the life of a hermit, are found to follow certain traditions and conduct themselves in a particular way in their relations with the common run of men. Even when man cuts himself off from all relations with human beings, and lives in a

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jungle on roots and fruits, he does not live entirely in himself. He may not depend for the sustenance of his physical life on the complex organisation of the economic world, but he has at least to establish and maintain some suitable relation with the organic world. If he has any mental life, it is the life that has been fed by the contribution of his fellow men. But such a man probably has no explicit moral consciousness and does not live the life of a moral man. We generally live in society and are members of various social groups. It is only in relation with other human beings that our moral consciousness makes itself most explicitly felt. The being of a moral man is found bound up with his relations with his fellowmen. We find as a matter of fact that every man is bound by a network of relations with other human beings. The currents of his life and thought run into those of his fellow men's. A man is not a windowless monad imprisoned within the four walls of his private being. He lives and grows not only in intercourse and communion with his fellow men, but literally *in* them as well. It may sound strange, but nevertheless it appears to be a fact. Not only did the Father live in the Son, we ordinary mortals too seem to live in one another. Take the instance of a father in a family where the relation among the members is particularly close. If his thoughts and feelings are any part of himself, he cannot be said to live entirely within his narrow self confined in his physical organism. His thoughts and feelings are never centred exclusively round his narrow self. They embrace his relations and children in such a way that he cannot be separated from the well-being of his children. Any harm done to them is more really his than any injury to his physical person. These are plain facts of everyday experience, and they unmistakably suggest that there is an actual intermingling of personalities in all our social

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life. We do not mean to uphold of course that the father lives merely in his children, so that when they disappear he should disappear also. His life and being may and do extend beyond those of his children, but his children form part of himself and when some of them meet their death before him, we should say, he suffers to that extent a serious loss in being. Let us try to elucidate our position a little further.

We hold that the mental life of a man cannot be separated from his self. His thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears ideas and ideals are part and parcel of his being. It is these which determine the concrete individuality of each man. Merely as knowing subjects, no two men ever betray any difference between themselves. As such they have no individuality. It is the contents of their mind which definitely mark out the distinctions of their personality. There is no man who does not live in his thoughts and feelings, ideas and interests. A person in his concrete reality will not be there if he is isolated from these contents of his mind. So we conclude that the thoughts and feelings of a man are part of his own self. Now, these are never exclusively centred within the person himself, but they go out to various objects and include them in their being. Just as it is an abstraction to think of the self apart from its thoughts and feelings, so will these thoughts and feelings be mere abstractions if they are viewed apart from their objects. We never entertain mere thoughts and mere feelings; but we always have thoughts about something and feelings for someone or another. These objects are essential to our thoughts and feelings. If the objects are included in our thoughts and feelings, and if our thoughts and feelings are within the self, the objects must also be included in the self. When we think of someone and feel for him, our being goes out in our thoughts and feelings

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and embraces their object. This is not a matter of mere theory. The things in which we are greatly interested are taken for all practical purposes as part of our very self. Our friends and relatives, houses and lands, clothes and furniture are part of our self in a very practical sense. We live and move in and about them, and if an attempt is made to efface the mark of our selfhood from them, we resist it with all the strength of our being. We call them 'mine'; and 'mine' has no intelligible meaning unless it is interpreted as part of myself!

Some objections will very readily suggest themselves against this view. I shall try to put these objections as strongly as I can, so that if I can successfully rebut these objections, I shall consider my position as fairly established.

1. In the first place, it may be said that thoughts and feelings exist entirely in the mind; they cannot literally be said to include in themselves the objects to which they only refer. My thought about a chair is not lying somewhere in or about the chair; it is entirely in my mind which thinks; whereas the chair exists outside the mind. However dearly I may love my friend, my friend is never an actual constituent of my feeling of love which is mental, while the existence of my friend is not affected by the existence or non-existence of my mental state.

2. We can think of the past and also of future. Our memories refer to the past and our hopes and fears mostly refer to the future. If our being were to go literally to things to which our thoughts and feelings refer, we should have our being extended to the past and to the future. But it is clear verdict of our experience that we live and are in the present. To say that my being is extended to the past or to the future is to say that I am in the past or in the future. This seems absurd.

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3. The things which we see and think about appear to be very distinct from ourselves. They are our objects, and the distinction between subject and object seems to be quite absolute. When we hate our enemies we are most clearly conscious of a serious opposition between ourselves and our enemies. If by cherishing any feeling about anything, we could make the thing part of ourselves, the enemies whom we heartily hate should nevertheless be part of our being. And we should not then experience any opposition and distinction between ourselves and our enemies. This however never appears to be the case.

4. In whatever sense our friends and our relatives as well as our properties may be ours, they are not in any sense *we*. From the fact that we call them ours we can see that we make a distinction between them and ourselves. However intimately I may love my friend, he can never be identified with my being. If he were swallowed up in my being, the very feeling of love between myself and him would be impossible.

5. This is evident from the fact even when a man loses his friends and relatives, his properties and all, he feels no change in his selfhood. He is always himself. His own being is not jeopardised by the loss of his properties. He is still there even though he has lost everything he used to call his. His being as such has not suffered any shrinkage in any dimension nor has it undergone any qualitative change.

Let us take these arguments one by one.

1. It is said that thoughts and feelings are in the mind. True, but where is the mind? One hypothesis will be that the mind is somewhere within the body or at best one with the nervous system. But if it is simply the nervous system or the brain, many serious difficulties will arise. If the mind

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is understood as strictly identical with the nervous system, the thoughts and feelings which are supposed to be in the mind, must be found somewhere in the nervous system itself. But these are never discovered in any part of the body or of the nervous system. So if thoughts and feelings are to be the contents of the mind, the mind cannot simply be identified with a physiological mechanism. If we think that the mind is somehow within the body, we can never understand how the knowledge of any object outside the body can be possible. It is supposed that physical objects even from a distance, send forth currents of physical energy, which through appropriate organs reach the nervous system and so the knowledge of the objects takes place. But if the mind is entirely within the body, it can but be conscious of the last wave of the current which has reached it. The wave itself cannot inform the mind that it has come from a distant object; because the wave is not supposed to be an intelligent principle and it cannot itself declare that it represents some other entity. Even if it tells that it comes from a distant outside object, the mind will not understand it, because the mind has no acquaintance with such an object. Nor is it possible for the mind to infer the object; for inference presupposes direct knowledge, and this being lacking in the present case, the inference too is not possible. So if the hypothesis we are considering were correct, instead of seeing a tree at a distance, we should merely feel a tickling sensation either in the brain or in the eye.

These difficulties compel us to suppose that the mind is not entirely confined within the organism, although it need not be denied that a physical organism is always associated with a mind. If the mind is not confined to the body alone, there should be no difficulty in supposing that it goes out to the object. The mind has always some content

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or other, and although the contents themselves do not constitute the mind, they do for a time form part of the mind. They cannot be in the mind and form no part of it. These contents again cannot be separated from the objects. To separate the objects from the contents is to say that the object can never be known. When we say we know some object, we mean that the object itself is the content. But although we say that the objects form part of the mind when they are known we do not mean that their being is affected by our knowing. They are in the mind only for a time, that is, when they are known, and they fall out of it when they are not known or are forgotten, without losing anything of their reality. In conceiving this relation of objects to the mind, we are helped by the theory of immanence and independence advocated by Neo-Realists. So although our friends and relations may enjoy their own independence, they are not incapable on that account of being embraced by our thoughts and feelings.

It has been said that our thoughts and feelings only refer to objects which are outside the mind. But what exactly is this reference? It is not an external relation between thoughts and things. Because we do not have thoughts complete in themselves on the one hand and things on the other, so that the relation of reference might simply be interposed between them. Our thoughts and feelings seem to include in themselves, as their objects, the things to which they are supposed to refer. If there is no thought in which nothing is thought and which does not refer to anything, then it is evident that in any concrete thought the thing thought of and the reference are given as part of the thought itself. In the last resort the proposition that our thoughts refer to things can only mean that things are known in our thoughts. And if they are to be known and known as they are, it is difficult to understand how they cannot be included in the thoughts in which they are known.

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Reference to objects seems to be a function of all thoughts, and if the reference is actual and goes right up to the object, then thought which is inseparable from this function must go the same length.

Moreover, where is this reference? It cannot be simply an occurrence in the brain; nor can we think that it is wholly within thought when we take thought as abstracted from its object. In that case thought would not be helped by 'reference' to transcend itself and reach out to objects. Reference then is only that aspect of our thoughts and feelings which signifies that things or objects are included in them.

2. Our being, at least as appearance, consists in its actuality. It is impossible to catch ourselves in the past or in the future. Neither the past nor the future is real as actual. The past is real in our memory, the future in our expectation. As thus made real, they may very well be part of our being without giving rise to any inconsistency.

3. The distinction between subject and object is a valid distinction, but it is real only within the life of the self which includes both subject and object. It is true that we have given the character of conscious subject to the self. It is easy to recognise the self in the subject. But the subject is not the whole self nor is mere subjectivity an adequate description of selfhood. The subject is always relative to the object. When nothing is given as object the subject ceases to be a subject, although it may not cease to be a self. The self seems to speak through the subject, and it is apt to be identified completely with subject. But this would be analogous to the mistake we should commit if we were to suppose that the Parliament is identical with the party in power, because the party in power speaks always in the name of the Parliament. The party in opposition as well as the party in power forms parts of

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the Parliament. The party in power is only dominant for the time being, but it is never the whole Parliament, although it may speak with the voice of the Parliament so long as it is in power. Similarly the subject is only the dominant aspect of the self and not the whole self. The subject is, as we have said, relative to the object, and so is not real by itself but only within a whole which includes itself with the object. Our enemies too are part of our very self. We may desire their complete destruction; but so long as they are there we cannot completely dissociate ourselves from them. They are like a disease of the body or the mind, to which we have fallen a prey and which has become part of our being. We may do our utmost to extirpate all the evil tendencies of our mind and thus we may assume an attitude of hostility towards them but still it cannot be denied they are part and parcel of our being. Our enemies are no better and no worse than the diseased parts of the self with which also we are identified.

4. The fact that we are never absolutely identified with our friends and relatives does not show that they are not part of ourselves. Our self being inclusive of them cannot from the nature of the case be completely identified with any one of them. Any whole is not absolutely identical with any of its parts, although the part taken together constitute the whole. My body is not my hand, but this does not show that my hand forms no part of my body.

5. It is true of course that even when I lose my properties, friends and relatives, I still continue to be myself. But is it exactly the same self which I was when I was in possession of them? Has not my self undergone any change on account of the loss I have sustained? The people in general seem to recognise some change and their recognition finds expression in their altered behaviour towards the persons who have become the victims of such

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losses. The man who has been rich and a friend of influential persons, is bound to feel the change that comes upon him with the loss of his property and friends. He finds that the respect, which used to be paid to him spontaneously, is now only grudgingly shown or not shown at all. His words do not carry the same weight with the public. He has not got the same credit with the people with whom he has to deal in any connexion. He is in a way the ghost of his former self. How are we then to suppose that his self has not suffered any change? When it is said that he has the same sense of selfhood or of himself, it is not remembered that the concrete personality of a man does not consist in his mere sense of selfhood. Everybody has the same sense of selfhood, but this does not make any particular person quite the same as another. Real men are not mere centres of an indistinguishable feeling of selfhood but are concrete personalities with physical and spiritual endowments of various kinds, showing themselves in their characteristic influences on men and things around them. There cannot be any set limit to the personality of a man as to how far it can go and how much it can include in itself. It is always found connected with a physical organism, but on the basis of it, a spiritual superstructure is raised, — a new dimension of being—which covers in its influence and being a much wider area of existence. We are changing from moment to moment according as the constituents of our body and the contents of our mind are changing. And although there are constant meetings and minglings between different personalities; in many identical contents, our distinct individuality is never lost; because there are no two persons who do not differ in their mental and physical constituents.

In upholding this view of the self, we are aware, we are going against the verdict of two very important schools

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of Indian thought. Both Sankhya and Vedanta maintain that the self or the spirit is a principle of intelligence which has no real connection with anything else. But although both these schools maintain that the self in its real nature exists in itself and is unattached to anything else, they do not deny the fact that in the world the self is found identified with a body together with a mass of physical and psychical dispositions. This identification is supposed to have taken place through 'ignorance' or 'desire'. But whatever may be the explanation of the fact that the self in its worldly course is found identified with a portion of the world of men and things, the fact itself is not and cannot be denied.

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LOGICAL CONSTRUCTION

The phrase 'logical construction' is gaining some currency in the philosophical literature of the present day. When it was first introduced into philosophy, even the author of the phrase was not probably very clear as to its exact meaning and significance, and those who heard it for the first time, of course, misunderstood it in various ways. But although misunderstood, it was at least supposed to have an important philosophical meaning with a metaphysical implication. Subsequent writers have tried to clear up the misunderstanding and to define its exact meaning. It is interesting to consider whether the phrase when cleared of the misunderstanding, still retains any philosophical meaning and whether the notion even when exactly defined, does not give rise to other difficulties of its own.

I do not know who was the original author of the phrase, but I believe it was from Russell that I first learnt that a physical thing, e.g. a table, was a logical construction. I tried to understand it in some such way. Sense-data alone are directly given to our experience, but they vary with different experiences and do not exist when the experience ceases. But a physical thing is the same for different experiences and exists both before and after the act of experience. A physical thing as such can never be given to our experience. As it is not originally known at all, we cannot even infer it from sense-data. Thus a physical thing is not a fact of experience at all, and still if we are to explain our notion of a physical thing, we can do so by the theory of logical construction. Out of the transient sense-data of our actual experience, we construct the idea of a standing physical thing. The physical object is regarded as a construction out of sense-data, because we can know

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it only in terms of actual and possible sense-data. Why the construction was called 'logical' was not very clear to me; I took the construction to be a work of the mind. The metaphysical implication of this view consisted in the idea that a physical object was no part of actual reality in which in fact only sense-data were to be found, the physical object being but a mental fiction or ideal construction.

It is now pointed out clearly by competent writers that the idea of a physical object being a logical construction involves no such consequences.* We are told that to say that tables are logical constructions out of sense-data is merely to assert a verbal proposition to the effect that to say something about tables is to say something about sense-data.** In other words, when one says that tables are logical constructions, one merely means that sentences about tables can be translated into other sentences in which the term 'tables' does not occur at all, but in which we suitably use the term 'sense-data' instead. It is not to be supposed that we can simply substitute the word 'sense-data' in the place of the word 'tables' or what we say about tables can be said about sense-data. Sense-data and physical objects are things of different order and if we said about the one class what we said about the other, we should only produce nonsense. We have to make use of the relevant term in the translation suitably, so that the resulting sentences should be meaningful and be equivalent to the original sentence.

But why should we take the trouble of translating sentences about material things into other sentences which do not refer to material things? The answer is : 'It serves to increase our understanding of the sentences in which we refer to material things.†

* *Mind*, 1931, p. 194, John Wisdom : Logical Constructions

** A. J. Ayer : *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 74.

† *Ibid.*, p. 82.



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Another point to be noted in this connection is that when *e* is a logical construction out of *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., *b*, *c*, *d*, etc., are not to be thought of as parts of, or elements, *e*. in So a material thing, which is a logical construction out of sense-data, is not a sum or aggregate of actual and possible sense-data as Hume or Mill supposed.

The whole situation as presented by the theory of logical construction appears somewhat confusing to me. It seems that logical construction is exclusively concerned with the translatability of certain sentences. In the last resort it means nothing but the linguistic equivalence between statements referring to different things. But the original sentences are either intelligible by themselves or they are not. If they are not intelligible, they cannot possibly be translated. And if they are intelligible, to what end should we take the trouble of translating them? The translation is supposed to increase our understanding of the original sentences. Is it really the case? and how is it possible? Suppose the original sentence is about a material thing and you translate it into other sentences which refer to sense-data. The original sentence speaks about a material thing and our understanding of it may be said to be increased only when in the translation we are given better information about the material thing ; but that information cannot possibly be given when you are speaking of something else altogether different from the material thing. By speaking about *Y*, you cannot possibly give any light whatever about *X*, which is altogether different from it. You say that your statements about sense-data are equivalent to your statement about the material thing. But how am I to understand the equivalence? I could somehow understand the equivalence, if the sense-data were parts of, or elements in, the material thing. But you say there is no such relation between the sense-data and the material thing. And when no other intelligible relation is

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suggested between them, your assertion of equivalence between the two classes of sentences cannot properly be understood. On the contrary, it is apt to produce confusion, at least to the extent that it suggests either that sense-data are elements in a material thing or that 'material thing' is only a way of speaking.

It seems quite clear that if sentences about sense-data are to be equivalent to a sentence about a material thing, then there must be some relation between the sense-data and the material thing. It cannot possibly be suggested that the entire relation between them consists merely in the fact that a statement about the material thing is equivalent to statements about sense-data. For, it is in order to understand this linguistic equivalence that we seek for an intelligible relation between sense-data and material things, and we cannot be satisfied by being told that the required relation is nothing but this linguistic equivalence. I do not know of any theory that satisfactorily explains the relation between sense-data and physical things as we understand them. And until that is done, the mere assertion that the two sorts of statements literally say the same thing will bring no enlightenment and carry no conviction.

If you said that there are no physical things and sense-data alone exist, we could understand that while we speak of physical things we are saying something about sense-data. But when you grant that physical things exist and there are also objective entities like sense-data, I do not see how a statement about a physical thing can be literally equivalent to another statement or a number of statements about sense-data. These statements may be somehow implied by a statement about a physical thing. But to be implied by a statement is a very different thing from saying the same thing that the other statement says.

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Supposing that a statement about a physical thing is equivalent to some other statements about sense-data, is it the case that the statements about sense-data are more intelligible than the statement about a physical thing? I think not. I assert that in the present state of our consciousness we are primarily aware of physical things, and it is only by abstraction and much reflection, if ever at all, that we become conscious of sense-data. It is a physical thing, or something in physical embodiment, that we see or touch, love or hate, fear or admire, and it is only by some effort of abstraction that we can raise from the bosom of physical things the ghostly apparitions which we call sense-data. A sense-datum which is not associated with a physical thing is scarcely intelligible. Even in an illusion the sense-datum is understood, however falsely, as being a mode of physical existence. I cannot understand a sense-datum without referring it, on the one hand, to an act of sensation, and on the other, to a physical object which is sensed. But a physical object can be well understood, so it seems to me, without any such extraneous reference. Thus it appears that we do not understand a statement about a physical thing better by translating it into statements about sense-data, but that a statement about a sense-datum is intelligible only when it ultimately refers to a physical object.

Let us even suppose that a statement about *e* is better understood when it is translated into statements about *b*, *c*, *d*, etc. But what do we gain thereby? Does this translation serve any philosophical purpose? I am aware that there are some people according to whom this is the only work that is genuinely philosophical. They call it philosophical analysis.

By this sort of analysis we are supposed to give a philosophical definition of a term, not by providing its

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explicit synonym, but by translating a sentence in which the term occurs into other sentences in which it is absent. I may frankly recognise that when a sentence is translated in this way, we have in many cases a better understanding of the original sentence. As much confusion and vagueness prevails in our ordinary thought and speech, this work is undoubtedly quite valuable. But I do not see that this amounts to anything more than linguistic clarification. Since the translation is equivalent to the original assertion, it cannot say in substance anything more than what is already said. It will particularly decide nothing as to the truth or falsity of the original statement. If this so-called philosophical analysis adds nothing to, or does not in any way alter, our ordinary views about life and the world, I do not see in what sense it is philosophical at all. To the great philosophical question of extending, modifying or justifying our knowledge of the world or reality the theory of logical construction is absolutely indifferent. Philosophy, I suppose, is expected at least to criticise or justify our ordinary views of the world. The idea of logical construction as now-a-days defined does not seem to have any relevance to this kind of work. I therefore conclude that logical construction which involves so-called philosophical analysis and ultimately means nothing but a kind of translation, cannot claim any great philosophical significance.

20 MR. A. J. AYER'S LOGICAL POSITIVISM

Students of contemporary philosophy have surely heard of a growing body of thinkers who are generally grouped under the name of the *Viennese Circle*, and whose philosophical theory is commonly known as logical positivism. Logical positivism may be said to be the latest important movement in European philosophy. The leaders of this movement, such as Schlick,* Wittgenstein and Carnap at one time belonged to Vienna, but even then they had important collaborators from other centres of learning, notably Reichenbach and Dubislav and others from Berlin. This movement is no longer confined to Vienna and Berlin; it has spread to many other universities and the leaders themselves have moved away from their original places of work. Carnap went to Prague; he has recently been appointed professor at Chicago. Wittgenstein is probably now at Cambridge. Reichenbach has been compelled, I think, for racial reasons to leave Germany, and has joined the University of Istanbul in Turkey.

There is an entire philosophical magazine in German (*Erkenntnis*) which is devoted to the elaboration of the views of these thinkers and publishes their latest researches. They have besides published many books and there are some books on their movement also. But not much material was available in English to study their thoughts. There is now an English magazine, *Analysis*, which is largely inspired by the ideals of this school. But there was no single book, as far as I know, in which a systematic exposition of their views could be found. It was

* We are extremely sorry to learn from a note published in the September issue of the *Philosophical Review* that Prof. Schlick was assassinated by a mentally deranged student in June last [in 1936]

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left to a young Oxford philosopher to supply this want. Mr. Ayer's book, *Language, Truth and Logic*, is not explicitly designed to give an exposition of the views of the *Viennese Circle* or their logical positivism. He writes with conviction as an independent thinker, but he admits that he is in closest agreement with the views of those thinkers and acknowledges his debt specially to Carnap.

I am not sure whether Mr. Ayer's view can be properly characterised as genuine positivism, but in rejecting metaphysics and connecting the meaning of a proposition with its verifiability he is certainly upholding a cardinal doctrine of the logical positivists. Mr. Ayer may be taken to represent the left wing of the school and like other leftists he presents an extreme view. In this paper I shall not be concerned with the orthodox logical positivism, but with the views of Mr. Ayer which he has propounded in his recently published book named above.

In the very first chapter, which is entitled 'The Elimination of Metaphysics,' Mr. Ayer is concerned to show that metaphysics, in the sense of knowledge of a transcendent reality, is quite impossible. Kant also maintained that there could be no knowledge of any supersensible reality, because what was supersensible could not be an object of sense-experience, and sense-experience, for Kant, was necessary to constitute a case of real knowledge. So for Kant too metaphysics was impossible. But Mr. Ayer distinguishes his position from that of Kant. According to Kant, constituted as we are, we cannot know supersensible realities, but propositions about them are not meaningless for us, and we can very well believe in them. For Mr. Ayer metaphysics is impossible because no metaphysical proposition has any literal significance. To speak metaphysics is to speak nonsense. The statement 'God exists' was not at all meaningless for Kant, although he confessed he would not be theoretically

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justified if he asserted it. Mr. Ayer tells us that the statement has no intelligible meaning. We may be curious to know what determines the significance of a statement. And so we learn that a statement is significant only when it is verifiable through sense-experience. If a proposition is to be verifiable and so significant, there should be some possible sense-experience relevant to it. So when it is said that the so-called metaphysical propositions are to be rejected because they are meaningless, the real ground to rejection appears to be that there are no sense-experiences relevant to them. This position is not after all very different from the position of Kant.

The criterion of verifiability is to be applied to statements in order to see whether they are significant. But we find many statements are accepted as significant although they are not strictly verifiable. So a distinction is made between practical verifiability and verifiability in principle. We cannot, for instance, practically verify whether there are mountains on the other side of the moon, because we have at present no means of going to the other side of the moon and of observing for ourselves the state of things there. And yet proposition about mountains on the other side of the moon are significant for us, because they are verifiable in principle, in the sense that we know what observations would make them true or false. Thus in deciding whether a statement is significant or not, we have to consider whether it is verifiable in principle.

There is another point to be noted about verifiability. A proposition is verifiable in the strict sense when it can be definitely established. But Mr. Ayer thinks that no proposition can be either conclusively proved or disproved. So verifiability in the strict sense is not useful at all, and we have to use the test of verifiability in a weak sense. In the weak sense a proposition is verifiable if it is possible for experience to render it probable. We shall discuss this

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question when we come to consider Mr. Ayer's notions of truth and falsity. But in the meantime we note that although Mr. Ayer has been freely speaking of statements and propositions as having or lacking meaning, he has not thought fit to provide us with a theory of meaning.

Moreover, it is apparent that he is using the term meaning in a technical sense. When he condemns a statement like 'God exists' as meaningless, he cannot possibly mean that 'God exists' is an unmeaning combination of sounds like abracadabra. Even about any modest empirical statement we can ask whether on hearing the statement we get no meaning at all before we have considered the question of its verifiability. If the statement gives us no meaning to start with how are we to consider whether or not it is verifiable? If you do not understand what a statement by itself means, what can you even attempt (either ideally or actually) to verify? If it must be admitted that we get some meaning from an empirical statement, even before we consider its verifiability, can we deny that sort of meaning to metaphysical propositions? It may be said that metaphysical propositions lack all factual content, which can come within our experience. But what if metaphysical propositions are never meant to express any such content?

Metaphysics is condemned on the ground that it is concerned with a transcendent reality which has no connexion with our experience. But do we have in the history of philosophy any instance of a metaphysics which deals with matters that are absolutely unconnected with our experience? It seems that we are interested in metaphysical problems only because their solutions are expected to throw light on important problems of life and conduct. We do not simply pass through experience, but also feel the need of understanding it. Metaphysics, if it does anything, must help us to understand and interpret

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experience. Metaphysical entities, whatever they be, must mean something for our experience, even though they may never be objects of sense-experience. It is mere prejudice to identify experience with sense-experience. If such identification were justified, the qualifying word 'sense' would not be necessary in the term 'sense experience.' Thus it seems that in condemning metaphysics, one either condemns something without proper grounds or rejects something that does not exist.

We commonly think that the main part of philosophy is metaphysics, but if metaphysics is eliminated from philosophy, it is interesting to know what still remains over for philosophy to do.

Mr. Ayer points out that it is not the business of philosophy to construct deductive systems. If we are to construct such a system, we require a starting point which should be absolutely certain. For unless our premises are certain, we cannot rightly arrive at conclusions which are certain. Descartes claimed to have discovered such a sure starting point in his *Cogito*. He deduced the existence of the self from the fact of thinking. The argument is usually stated thus : "I think, therefore I am." But strictly speaking, we do not have 'I think' to start with. All that we can legitimately say is that there is a thought now. But from the fact that there exists a certain thought at a time, it does not at all follow that there are other thoughts at any other time or that there has been a series of thoughts sufficient to constitute a single self. Hence, our author points out, we cannot follow the example of Descartes.

There are however *a priori* truths which are certain. But *a priori* truths are tautologies. It is only a tautology which we can know *a priori* and of which we can be certain. It may be noted here that Mr. Ayer recognises no *a priori* synthetic propositions. Now from a set of *a priori* analytical propositions or tautologies, taken by themselves, only

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other tautologies can be deduced, and they determine no truth about reality. Besides tautologies we have only empirical propositions and they have their proper place in some science or other. Whatever falls within experience can be made an object of scientific study. But if empirical propositions are assigned to sciences and tautologies to logic and mathematics, there seems to be nothing left for philosophy. And in point of fact, I think, there should be no philosophy for people who are wedded to this way of thinking. But Mr. Ayer contrives (in common with some Cambridge philosophers) to find some work for philosophy, which is called analysis. Let us now try to understand what is meant by philosophical analysis.

Philosophical analysis is not a name for any subtle intellectual process by means of which one might hope to obtain for oneself an unerring insight into the heart of reality. It is not designed to give us any new knowledge. It is merely a way of defining certain terms and is thus exclusively concerned with linguistic usage.

A distinction is made between explicit definitions and definitions in use. In an explicit definition, we are concerned to find out a symbol or symbolic expression which is synonymous with the term to be defined. Two terms or symbols are said to be synonymous with one another when the place of the one in a sentence can be taken up by the other without producing a change in the meaning of the sentence. When we define an oculist as an eye-doctor, our definition is an explicit one. Philosophical analysis has nothing to do with definitions of this sort. It gives us only definitions in use, and in such definitions we merely show how the sentences, in which a certain term to be defined occurs, are to be translated into other sentences which contain neither the definiendum nor any of its synonyms. Those who have some acquaintance with the literature of the subject will have seen that we are here

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introduced into the theory of logical construction. When a sentence containing x can be translated into other sentences which do not contain x or any of its synonyms, but a, b, c , etc. then x is said to be a logical construction out of a, b, c , etc. It is in this sense that a material thing is said to be a logical construction out of sense-contents. We are not to understand by this that a material thing is composed of sense-contents. All that is meant is that when we are speaking of material things, we are saying something about sense-contents. That is to say, sentences about material things are translatable into sentences about sense-contents. Philosophical analysis thus instructs us only in the use of certain terms. When we are told that a table is a logical construction out of sense-contents, we do not at all know how the table is actually constructed nor what relation there is between it and the sense-contents out of which it is said to be logically constructed. It is a pity that although the theory of logical construction is vital to many of Mr. Ayer's doctrines, he has not taken the trouble to explain the theory in sufficient detail. The most elaborate treatment of the subject, as far as I know, is still to be found in the series of impressive articles which Mr. John Wisdom contributed to *Mind* some time ago. Those who are not already familiar with the notion of logical construction will fail to understand the exact meaning of many of Mr. Ayer's statements. In some places he has spoken of x as constituted by a, b, c , etc., without any qualification, and one may think that a, b, c , etc., are parts of or elements in x , whereas in fact x is a mere logical construction out of them. But it is true that in other places he has explicitly stated that in such cases, a, b, c , etc., are not to be conceived as parts or elements of x .

Thus it appears that the task of philosophy is to give us definitions in use. This in the last resort means that we are to learn from philosophy how sentences of a certain

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kind are to be translated into sentences of another kind. But this linguistic business of translating sentences seems rather a poor work for philosophy. And then, either the original sentences are by themselves intelligible or they are not. If they are not intelligible and we do not understand what they mean, we cannot possibly translate them. If they are intelligible, why should we translate them at all? It is supposed that such translation increases our understanding of the original sentences. It is admitted that we understand in a way what is meant by 'This is a table' and can identify the situation which would verify or falsify this statement (p. 83). But we may well be quite unaware of the hidden complexity of this statement which is revealed by our translation of it in terms of sense-contents. Thus it is claimed that our views are clarified and understanding increased by this sort of analysis. I am by no means sure that this is really the case.

You no doubt assert that when you are saying something about sense-contents (in your translation) you are saying something about the table, although you do not mention the table by name. But when you further assert that the sense-contents are not parts of the table or any elements in it and do not also indicate any intelligible relation between the sense-contents and the table, how is it possible then to take your statements about sense-contents as equivalent to a statement about the table? Shall I get any idea of the table from your statements about sense-contents, when I know that the table is not related to the sense-contents? It may be said that the table is not altogether unrelated with the sense-contents, since it is a logical construction out of them. But our question now is precisely about the sort of relation that is implied by logical construction and unless that relation can be clearly indicated, logical construction is bound to remain a mystery or a deceptive name. Moreover, logical

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construction ultimately means nothing more than a kind of linguistic equivalence between certain statements, and we contend that the equivalence is either quite dubious or argues a like equivalence between the terms spoken about in the different statements. We suggest that the theory of logical construction, far from helping the elimination of metaphysics, is itself based on an unavowed metaphysical hypothesis of the identity of material things with sense-contents. This hypothesis is metaphysical, because it cannot be proved or disproved by sense-experience.

Mr. Ayer represents a type of strict empiricism, and since experience gives us only contingent truth, he has to explain how we come to possess necessary truths, as are undoubtedly formed in logic and mathematics. He says that the truths of logic and mathematics are all analytical propositions or tautologies (p. 100). They in fact represent no truth about reality at all. They express only our determination to use certain expressions or symbols equivalently or as synonymous with one another. This amounts to saying that logic is concerned merely with linguistic conventions. Will all logicians be ready to accept this position? It is as if we were not to obey logic but logic were to be created by a fiat of our will. For our determination to use language in a particular way is nothing but an expression of our will. We have no doubt heard from some authorities that logic and mathematics contain nothing but tautologies. We should have been very grateful to Mr. Ayer if he had taken pains to explain at some length how in logic we are concerned with nothing but tautologies. As it is, his assertions fail to carry conviction.

As a consistent empiricist Mr. Ayer does well to deny the concept of truth altogether. By sense-experience we get sound or smell, and we can never get at truth as a content of sense. But those who are not of his persuasion will not be convinced that in saying that a proposition is

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true we are not asserting anything *about* the proposition, but are simply asserting the proposition itself. According to Mr. Ayer, to say that it is true that Queen Anne is dead is merely to say that Queen Anne is dead. Still he cannot altogether avoid the problem of truth. And he formulates it in this form: How are propositions validated? Of course all propositions are not validated in the same way. Propositions of logic and mathematics are valid if they do not involve self-contradiction. But an ordinary empirical proposition has to be validated by our actual observation. In this connexion Mr. Ayer maintains the very unpositivistic position that every empirical proposition is an hypothesis which can be rendered more or less probable by our favourable or unfavourable observation, but can never be absolutely established or confuted. A positivist is not ordinarily doubtful about the deliverance of sense-experience. In fact the only certain knowledge for him is the knowledge derived from sense-experience, but if sense-experience also fails to give us certainty, we may well despair of ever obtaining any knowledge that is certain. We can see here how empiricism may lead to scepticism and agnosticism.

By a very ingenious argument Mr. Ayer tries to make out that we can be doubtful even about the truth of an ostensive proposition like 'This is red' which refers not to a physical thing but to a content of sense. It is easy to understand how we may be mistaken in our judgments of perception, because there are cases of illusion, and we cannot be antecedently certain whether in a particular case the supposed perception is not an illusion. But when it is not a question of knowing an independent and external reality but only a content of sense, whose entire being consists in appearing within experience and which therefore does not permit the distinction of seeming and being, we fail to see how there can be a possible mistake about it. Mr. Ayer does not mean to suggest that our sensations

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are themselves doubtful (p. 131). Indeed it would be, according to him, nonsensical to say so, because sensations are not the sort of thing that can be doubted. Only propositions about them are doubtful. Sensations simply occur, and it would be a gross logical blunder to identify a proposition about a sense-content with the corresponding sensation. But do sensations occur like physical events without having a necessary implication for knowledge? When a sensation occurs, do we or do we not know that it has occurred? If it is permissible, when a sensation has occurred, that I should know that it has occurred, may I not indubitably state that it has occurred? A sensation is of course not the same thing as a proposition about a sense-content, but if the sensation is to be available for knowledge and communicable, it inevitably gives rise to a proposition about a sense-content, and the proposition seems to be as indubitable as the occurrence of the sensation itself.

If all empirical propositions are mere hypotheses, it is difficult to see how we can ever arrive at any knowledge, and how any proposition can be validated or even rendered more or less probable. Knowledge should consist of positive assertion and take the form 'this is so'. But a hypothesis makes no assertion, and so by piling up any number of hypotheses we can never obtain a positive assertion which knowledge demands. We frame a hypothesis to explain some facts which we already know and to anticipate others which we expect to know in the future. A hypothesis does not present us with a fact, but it has meaning and is relevant only in reference to some facts. If the facts turn out as we anticipate, our hypothesis is rendered probable. But there should be no doubt about the facts themselves. If in the place of facts, we get only other hypotheses, they will not have the slightest tendency to increase in the smallest measure the probability of the original hypothesis.

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Mr. Ayer is constantly speaking of sense-contents and we should welcome his definition of the term. He defines a sense content as a part of sense-experience (p. 188). Apparently he regards sense-experience as being quite intelligible without definition. But in the sense in which we generally understand sense experience, can we speak of it as having parts? Moreover, when we speak of something as being a part of another, we mean that there is something beside it within that whole. What is there beside sense-experience? If you say it is consciousness, I have to ask whether you can legitimately accept an entity like consciousness, and, if you do, whether consciousness and content can form co-ordinate parts of any whole.

The self as a substance is of course rejected by Mr. Ayer but it is still retained as a logical construction out of sense-experiences. As no logical construction contains as its parts the entities out of which it is constructed, we should not conceive of the self as a sum or an aggregate of sense-experiences, as Hume did (p. 198). It is admitted that a sense-experience, which forms part of the sense-history of one self, does not occur in the sense-history of another self (p. 194). That is, all sense-experiences are subjective, and so must also be the sense-contents, because a sense-content is only a part of a sense-experience.

A curious result follows from this. As one is acquainted only with one's own sense-experiences, and cannot by any means have the sense-experiences of another self, one must, it would seem, always remain solipsist. Mr. Ayer thinks that he can very well get out of solipsism, because from the peculiar behaviour of certain sense-contents (which form the bodies of other people) he can be reasonably led to believe in the existence of other persons. Are we then to suppose that other selves are constructions out of sense-contents as material things

are? We thought selves were constructed out of sense-experiences and as the experiences of other people are not available to us, we should be unable to construct them. We can construct only one-self, which is our own, because the material (our own sense-experiences) for such construction is available to us. When for the lack of material the construction of other selves cannot take place, and if selves are nothing but constructions, we seem to be driven to the conclusion that other selves should not exist for us. We may be told that logical construction is not actual making, and that when it is said that the self is a logical construction what is meant is that to speak of a self is to say something of sense-experiences. But since the only sense-experiences available to me are those that are mine, is it not plain that for us to speak of other selves is to say something about my own sense-experiences? I cannot distinguish this position from solipsism.

However, I feel that the whole discussion about solipsism should be, from Mr. Ayer's point of view, quite pointless. Solipsism is significant only for a person to whom the self is a primary certainty. If the self has a completely intelligible meaning for me to start with, then and then only is it possible for me to think of everything else as a state or part of the self. This is not the position of Mr. Ayer. He understands the meaning of the self in terms of sense-experiences, because the self for him is a logical construction out of them. It is sense-experience that has primary meaning for him. He does not think it necessary that a sense-experience should be owned or appropriated by a self in order to be intelligible. There may very well be the sense-experiences of various kinds and of any number; and so there should be no difficulty to construct any number of selves out of them. It is true that he says that the sense-experiences which belong to one self cannot belong to another. But this does not mean that a self has a peculiar

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access to certain sense-experiences which it does not have in regard to others. It merely means, or at least should mean, that the sense-experiences which fall in one group do not fall in another. From this I do not see how any question of solipsism can arise at all.

From what we have already learnt about Mr. Ayer's line of thinking we may well understand why he cannot concede any objective meaning to our ethical judgments. The ethical attribute of an act is not surely apprehended through any of our senses, and when all our judgments are supposed to derive their meaning from sense-experience, we can easily see how the ethical attribute can never fall within the literal significance of any judgment. Really speaking there are no ethical judgments and our ethical terms have no factual content. When we say 'you acted wrongly in stealing that money,' it is as if we merely said 'you stole that money' but in a peculiar tone. Our so-called ethical judgments then are no judgments, but mere ejaculations which may express certain feelings in our mind, but do not assert them. It is in this way that Mr. Ayer distinguishes his position from that of the subjectivist. The subjectivist does not say that an ethical judgment makes no assertion at all, but he only says that the assertion is of the pleasure or displeasure of the subject. When I say of an act that it is good, I assert something no doubt, but it is not some peculiar non-empirical quality called goodness that is asserted, but only the empirical fact of my being pleased with the act. This is the subjectivist view. Mr. Ayer disagrees with it and for the sufficient reason that to say of an act that it is not good but pleasant involves no self-contradiction. According to Mr. Ayer, when I say of an act that it is good, I am not asserting something about the act or about anything else. My saying that it is good is like uttering a cry which may

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express some feeling, but does not amount to a proposition which makes an assertion. I think Mr. Ayer has here seized a very important point of distinction, and what he says is very proper from his point of view. But whether it is true to our moral experience is another matter.

He does not find any meaning in the term God also. But he says he does not favour atheism too, because the statement 'God does not exist' is equally meaningless for him. He makes another interesting point. In saying that statements about God have no intelligible meaning, he thinks he is saying no more than what many theists themselves admit, according to whom God transcends all human understanding. But in spite of all the support he claims from theists, the unassertive atheism of Mr. Ayer will be, I think, quite plainly seen.

Mr. Ayer has also given his definitive solutions of outstanding philosophical disputes! In his opinion the existence of different schools or parties within philosophy is quite unwarranted (p. 209). Because the questions with which philosophy is properly concerned are purely logical questions, the dispute about them can always be settled with sufficient care and scrutiny. It does not occur to Mr. Ayer that disputes about logical matters even may be quite endless and that with regard to the very conception of logic itself people may not, and indeed do not, agree. I am sure that the linguistic conception of logic, which Mr. Ayer advocates will not be accepted by many competent logicians.

So Mr. Ayer innocently proceeds to give final solutions of philosophical questions. He has tried to settle three main disputes, namely, those of empiricism and rationalism, realism and idealism, and monism and pluralism. Let us here refer to only one of them, the dispute between realism and idealism.

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The main philosophical question here is , what is entailed by sentences of the form 'x is real'? The idealists following Berkeley assert that to say that x is real or x exists is to say that x is perceived, so that it is a self-contradiction to say that x exists unperceived. They further maintain that to say that x is perceived is to say that x is mental. So the conclusion is that everything that exists is mental. The realists object to all these assertions, and they point out that Berkeley was wrong in maintaining that a sensible quality could not exist unsensed. His mistake was due to a faulty analysis of sensation which overlooked the distinction between the object sensed and the act of consciousness directed upon it. Mr. Ayer judges that this criticism is unjust, inasmuch as the act is quite mythical, because inaccessible to observation, and the so-called object should rather be conceived as a content of sense which of course cannot occur without being experienced. The idealists are therefore here right when they say that sense-contents cannot exist unsensed. But even though material things are constituted by sense-contents (p. 223), they are wrong in maintaining that material things cannot exist unperceived. Because a material thing is not a sum or an aggregate of sense-contents, but only a logical construction out of them. The realists are here right. When we have thus conceded the partial validity of their respective claims, we may hope that both realists and idealists will compose their quarrel for good. It remains to be seen whether the actual disputants themselves will accept our judgment as being a final and reasonable settlement of their ancient dispute.

Mr. Ayer writes with evident enthusiasm and conviction. There is vigour as well as clarity in his style. He has also displayed a good deal of ingenuity and subtlety in his arguments. But still we feel a certain lack of depth in his pronouncements. He does not seem to realise fully

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the profound significance which the philosophical problems have for certain minds.

Russell, in a review of Mr. Ayer's book, has referred to the trend of thought represented by it as the youngest and most vigorous offspring of the marriage of empiricism and mathematical logic which took place at the beginning of the present century. If we are allowed to judge of the marriage from the character of its issue, the marriage was, in our view, anything but legitimate. Apart from metaphor, we find it difficult to unite logic with empiricism. If sense-experience is the only source of knowledge and the ultimate court of appeal in a dispute about meaning, as empiricism would have it, we fail to see how we can grant even the possibility of the science of logic. The concept of logic cannot arise from sense-experience. No dispute about logic can be settled by an appeal to sense. The logical principles have to be developed, if from anywhere at all, out of the depth of our own consciousness, and empiricism, I suppose, cannot allow any such source of knowledge. If logic does anything, it considers judgments or propositions and their relations. Since these entities are not given by sense-experience, to discover and judge them we have to rise to a level of consciousness to which those who have chosen to confine themselves to sense-experience cannot possibly rise. Consistency would demand that they should reject logic along with metaphysics. And in fact they do deny logic, although they do not say so plainly. When they reject the very concept of truth with which logic is commonly supposed to be specially concerned, and regard logical principles as matters of linguistic convention, they have rejected, so it seems, everything of logic but its name.

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I propose to discuss in this paper what sort of being, if any at all, we are entitled to ascribe to a proposition. It used to be supposed that a judgment expressed in language was a proposition. That opinion appears no longer to be held generally by logical writers. It is recognised now-a-days that propositions are "not the same as sentences, facts and judgments". (Eaton, *General Logic*, p. 22). A proposition is not the same thing as the sentence in which it is expressed because the sentence may be English or un-English, ambiguous or obscure, but is not properly characterised as true or false, whereas truth or falsity is the distinctive characteristic of a proposition. Similarly propositions are to be distinguished from facts. Either there is a fact or no fact answering a certain description. But a fact is never appropriately described as true or false. A judgment, as distinguished from what is judged, is a psychical process, which is different with different individuals, and cannot therefore be identified with a proposition which maintains its identity in different contexts.

But what can it possibly be if it is neither an objective fact nor a subjective process nor again a linguistic or other symbolic expression? Some people are therefore led to deny that there is any such thing as a proposition understood in the above sense. They contend that what we really have is a subjective thought (judgment) in respect of some objective fact, but there is nothing intermediate between them, which is neither the one nor the other. When I judge 'The flower is red', the whole situation is completely analysable into my thought of the red flower which is a subjective fact and the red flower itself which is the content of my thought. The red flower is a fact and we know it. But 'that the flower is red' or 'the flower being red' is no actual

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entity at all which can be indifferently affirmed or denied. There is no standing neutral entity like a proposition which we can believe, disbelieve, doubt or question. In all real judgments we are face to face with some objective facts. When however the believed fact turns out to be no fact, as it happens in the case of illusion or error, the judgment also turns out to be illusory, i. e., no judgment at all. Thus there appears to be no ground to believe in propositions apart from facts and judgments. At best we may take a proposition to be an abstraction from actual judgments, beliefs and disbeliefs. But it would be wrong to credit this abstraction with an independent being of its own.

Still there is a case for propositions. It appears to be a fact that one and the same thing can be thought by different persons. If this were not possible, there could be no intelligible discussion about any matter. You understand my words only when you are able to apprehend the content which I have sought to express through them, when, that is, the content of my thought becomes the content of your thought also. This identical content cannot be the same as the psychic acts which are different from one another. We know cases where what is believed by one person is exactly what is disbelieved by another, and what is affirmed by one is the very thing that is denied by the other. What can this self-identical thing be but a proposition?

Formal logic is supposed to study the forms of certain things. These things are not physical substances or mental events. And at the same time we cannot suppose that these forms do not belong to anything at all. We have therefore to admit such entities as propositions to provide material for logic.

When I judge truly, what I judge may be a fact. But when you understand my judgment, you do not necessarily take it to be a fact. When I judge that Calcutta is smaller

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than Waltair, you surely understand exactly what I mean, but your understanding does not require you to take my judgment (what I judge) to be a fact. Thus it appears impossible to deny propositions altogether. But the question again comes, what sort of entity can a proposition be if it is neither an objective fact nor a subjective thought?

Some people supposed that the dichotomous division of reality into mind and matter was not exhaustive, and that there was a third realm of subsistence to which propositions belonged. I imagine that the present-day opinion is not in favour of a distinct world of subsistence separated from the world of existence. At least I think that if anything is to be real, it must be accommodated in the one actual world in which we all believe. Can we really find room for propositions in this world?

Two things have to be borne in mind in this connexion. When we have seen that a proposition is not a subjective act, we have to recognise that it is something objective, that is, our thought forms no part of its being and so it can subsist by itself, whether one thinks it or not. When we think, a proposition no doubt is our content, but the proposition is not brought into existence by our thought. Our thought only makes us conscious of the proposition. Secondly, we should remember that there are false propositions as well as true ones. In the case of a true proposition it is possible to identify the proposition with some objective fact. But a false proposition cannot be so identified. Therefore a proposition as such cannot always mean a fact. It should therefore be so conceived as to combine fact and no-fact, and that too objectively.

Fact means actuality and no-fact means lack of actuality. Now, what sort of entity is that which can be both actual and not actual also? We find that the idea of the possible provides such a combination. What is possible

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can be actual as well as not actual also. We do not of course mean that what is actual can be also not actual at the same time. That would be sheer contradiction. We mean simply that the possibility of a thing is compatible with its actuality as well as with its non-actuality. What is possible may be actual or may not be actual, and in either case its possibility is not denied. Moreover possibility is an objective determination. What is possible or not possible in a certain case is determined exclusively by the nature of the things concerned and not certainly by any of our thoughts about them.

Some logicians are thus led to suppose that the proposition is a possible. (Stout, *Mind*, 1932, p. 299 ; Johnson, *Logic* pt. 1, p. 14). When we affirm or deny that the flower is red, the common content to our different attitudes of mind is the possibility of the flower being red. When the possibility is a realised possibility, the proposition that the flower is red is true ; and when it is not so realised, the proposition fails to be true.

Let us try to understand this position. If a proposition is a possibility, when we assert a proposition, do we assert a possibility? When I say 'The flower is red' do I really mean that the flower may be red! Again, when I deny the same proposition do I mean to deny the possibility of the flower being red. That can scarcely be the meaning. We have therefore to suppose that although a proposition is a possible, when we affirm or deny it, we affirm or deny actuality of what is possible.

Now the question comes, when a proposition is affirmed and is found to be true, do we still find it to be a proposition, i. e., a possibility? It seems, on the one hand, that a proposition cannot cease to be a proposition by being affirmed or by being true. For truth must belong to a proposition, and affirmation is the only possible knowledge-

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function in regard to a true proposition, and it seems absurd to suppose that affirmation and truth will turn a proposition into no proposition. On the other hand, it is highly unusual to speak of a realised fact as still a possibility, and there is no doubt that in the case of a true proposition, we have a possibility that has realised itself and turned itself into a fact. Is it then still a possibility? If the actual fact is no longer a possibility, then we have to admit that a proposition is no proposition when it is true.

The paradox may be resolved if we suppose that a realised possibility is still a possibility, because what is possible is sometimes actual, and so actuality is no negation of possibility, but only a further determination of it. What is possible does not become impossible when it happens to be actual also.

But the main difficulty of this position is as to how the possible is to be conceived purely in objective terms. Objective reality consists of actual facts. What is not an actual fact or a part of it, can scarcely be understood as objectively real; and by the term 'possible' something over and above the actual seems surely to be meant. There is nothing in the objective world that declares itself to be merely possible. We can conceive of many possibilities on the ground of some actual facts, but these possibilities have no objective being apart from our thought. If we grant this, we admit that a proposition has no being apart from our actual thinking.

Whitehead has given a metaphysical treatment of propositions and he also speaks of them as possibilities. Propositions for him are not unlimited possibilities like eternal objects. They are possibilities understood in reference to a limited range of actual entities. They occupy a definite place in Whitehead's metaphysics which cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to say that their claim to reality

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is fulfilled ultimately in the conceptual realisation of God who is an actual entity. Whitehead plainly recognises that a mere possible, unless realised in the conceptual feeling of some actual entity, is indistinguishable from nonentity. God who envisages all possibilities is always available for him to give reality to whatever we can conceive of as possible. A proposition is a hybrid entity, requiring an actual situation (from which the subject is derived) and an eternal object (a possibility which serves as the predicate) referred to it. The situation is constituted by some actual entities which are real by themselves, and the eternal object or the possible is real ultimately in the mind of God. Whitehead can thus secure the objective reality of his propositions.

But if we are not yet prepared to accept the metaphysics of Whitehead and do not feel justified to call in God in every case to solve our metaphysical difficulties, how should we then understand the objectivity of a proposition? Let us see how we understand a proposition when we do not know whether it stands for a fact or even know that it stands for no fact. It is to be noted that even in such a case we do not fail to understand a proposition as a proposition. When I say 'Waltair is larger than Calcutta', you are able to understand me because you know the terms Waltair and Calcutta and also the relation 'larger than.' These are all objective realities and therefore you can know them. We cannot know what is not real at all.

We may take 'larger than Calcutta' to be a universal. This universal is real in the objective world. It is found in London and indeed in all places which are in fact 'larger than Calcutta' and is understood in one unique sense of a universal. Every proposition can ultimately be analysed into a given particular and a universal, however complex that universal may be. I take a hint from Whitehead and



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say that in knowing a proposition, I know a particular and a universal, and these have their appropriate place in reality and are real.

But in knowing a proposition we do not know a particular *and* a universal, but a universal *in reference to* a particular. How is 'in reference to' to be understood objectively?

I take it to stand for mere relatedness. Mere relatedness is a very general relation subsisting between any two terms by virtue of their belonging to a common world. So when we understand a proposition we know two terms as merely related. The terms and their mere relatedness are objective facts. The proposition is true, when the general relatedness is further determined in an appropriate form proper to the terms concerned, and it is false when it is not so determined. But whether further determined or not, the general relatedness between them is never annulled. If you insist that there are only determinate relations between terms, and no general relatedness, then I say you cannot possibly understand a false proposition, since the determinate relationship is lacking between its terms. And if two terms are absolutely unrelated, the absence of relation between them cannot be determined.

But there is a difficulty. If a proposition stands for a universal in relation to a particular, and if these are all objective facts, how is a proposition ever false? And moreover we do not seem to assert a general relatedness between the terms which is available everywhere. We assert a particular relation and it is altogether absent in the case of a false proposition.

Here we can see the obvious advantage of a subjectivist view. One can think or speak of any relation between two terms, but the relation posited in thought may

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not be present in fact. When I understand a false proposition, I understand someone thinking or speaking of a certain relation between two terms. I know the terms which stand for facts, and also the thinking or speaking of the relation which too is a fact. We thus understand falsity by introducing an element of subjectivity. If falsity too were objective, it would be indistinguishable from truth.

But there is another side to this question. What is false is not the subjective thinking, but only the objective meaning which is equally intelligible to all. The difficulty is to find out the real status of this non-subjective propositional meaning which does not yet amount to fact. I confess I do not feel sure as to what may be the right solution of this difficulty. Tentatively, however, I venture to make the following suggestions.

Since we cannot know what is not, and since in understanding a proposition, even when it is false, we certainly know something, a proposition must stand for certain aspects of fact or certain objective entities. They are not understood merely in their diversity, but only in a mode of unity. This gives their propositional status. Even in the proposition 'Waltair is larger than Calcutta,' the terms are certainly related to one another. Waltair is related to 'larger than,' as we find it illustrated in 'Waltair is larger than Amalner' and 'larger than' is also related to Calcutta, as we clearly see in 'London is larger than Calcutta.' These entities themselves are facts and they are also related, but they are not related in such a way as to constitute a single fact. We conclude then that in all propositions we have facts in relation to one another. In a true proposition these facts also constitute one single complex fact. In a false proposition they are related but do not constitute one single fact.

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Other Men's Thoughts

22 ACHARYA KRISHNACHANDRA'S CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

"What is philosophy?" is a philosophical question in a sense in which "What is mathematics?" is not a mathematical question. This question, like many other philosophical questions, does not appear to have yet received its final answer. And, so, distinguished philosophers, even to-day, after philosophy has run its course for more than two thousand years, find it of interest to raise and try to answer this question. Different philosophers, not only in different lands and at different times, but even in the same country and at the same time, seem to be doing different things in the name of philosophy; and so an outsider or even a beginner in philosophy feels naturally curious to know what exactly is philosophy. Moreover, philosophy being predominantly a self-conscious activity, it is also the duty of a professional philosopher to raise sometimes to the level of self-consciousness the nature of his own work and try to define, for himself as well as for others, what exactly he does when he philosophises. Such being the case, it may be instructive to know what a distinguished modern Indian philosopher who expressly and specifically deals with this question has to say on this subject.

Acharya Krishnachandra,* who died in 1949, was

*In his life time, and even subsequently, he was popularly known, in certain circles, as Prof. K. C. Bhattacharya. Among his close associates, whether students or friends, he was known as Krishna Babu, just as Rabindranath was known as Rabi Babu. Many people perhaps do not realise that in India we traditionally refer to our great men by their proper names and not by their surnames as is done in modern Europe. Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, etc., are all surnames whereas Shankara, Ramanuja, Udayana, Gangesha, Raghunatha, Bankimchandra, Rabindranath and even Radhakrishnan are all proper names. The present vogue of referring to people by their surnames appears to be a legacy of Western influence on our culture.

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perhaps the acutest philosophical thinker of modern India. He was asked to make a personal statement of his philosophical position to be included in the first edition of *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* published in London (1936), but instead of making a general statement of his philosophical views he simply dealt with this one question, "The Concept of Philosophy".

Krishnachandra's writing was very terse and required repeated perusal for proper appreciation, and his very subtle ideas did not admit of easy comprehension. I shall try to explain here, as clearly as I can, whatever I have managed to understand, of Krishnachandra's views on this subject as presented in his well known contribution to *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*.

At the beginning of his paper, he tries to indicate his general philosophical position by pointing out his agreement with, and difference from, Kant's view of the self—the central theme of Krishnachandra's philosophy. For Kant, the self is a necessity of thought and is the object of moral faith but not knowable in itself. Krishnachandra accepts that the self is not actually known and is an object of faith (though not necessarily of moral faith), but he rejects the idea that the self is not knowable at all or that it is literally thinkable. In his opinion, the so-called extension of thought beyond experience and the possibility of experience, means only the use of verbal form of thought as a symbol for an unthinkable reality. Such symbolising use of the form of thought is no actual thought. So he understands Kant's idea of the Reason not only as not knowledge, but not even thought in the literal sense. We shall presently see what he understands by literal thinking.

Like many other original thinkers, Krishnachandra has special senses for some of his words. Happily he does not coin any new word, but only uses some of the current

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words in his specialised senses, e.g., speaking, thinking, knowing, etc. To speak is, for him, to express some belief in words. As he says, to speak is to formulate a belief. What is spoken must be in the first instance believed.

Normally, of course, when we speak, we try to express and communicate some belief. But when a man speaks a lie, he surely does not believe what he says. Is he then not speaking? Krishnachandra says that even a lie is to be understood with the universal and generally understood prefix of all speech, "Believe me". Apparently the liar invites his hearer to believe what he says. So even here we find the formulation of a belief which is not held by the speaker but sought to be imposed on the hearer. We may, I think, concede that a lie is not really or truly spoken. That is to say, when one lies one does not speak truly but falsely.

In many cases, what seems to be meant by speaking may roughly be rendered as thinking in a general sense. Krishnachandra, however, understands thinking in a restricted sense. Thinking is for him judging, and judging in a literal sense. In literal judgements, the predicates explicate the meanings of the subjects and are not presupposed by them. That is, thinking is judging synthetically. If the subject presupposes or elaborates the meaning of the predicate, then we have no judgement proper, although we may use the form of judgement, and so consequently it will not express any actual thinking.

His idea of knowledge appears very similar to that of Kant, although he expresses it differently. Knowledge implies belief, but the content believed in the case of knowledge must be understood as distinct from belief and independent of it, i.e. understood, in his phraseology, without reference to the speaking of it.

With this preliminary explanation of his terms, we may be ready for a statement of his actual views. He appears

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sympathetic to the modern contention that actual knowledge is to be found in science only and that philosophy gives us no actual knowledge, but still he insists that both science and philosophy are expressions of theoretic consciousness.

Theoretic consciousness at its minimum is the understanding of a speakable. He distinguishes four kinds of speakables, corresponding to four grades of speaking, or what would ordinarily be called, grades of thought, such as empirical thought, contemplative thought, spiritual thought and transcendental thought, all comprised within theoretic consciousness. But, of course, Krishnachandra recognises only empirical thought as actual thought, and thoughts of higher grades as only symbolic thoughts. These different grades of thought have different kinds of content, called fact, self-subsistence, reality and truth, being the content respectively, of empirical, contemplative, spiritual and transcendental thought. The content of empirical thought or fact is studied in science, and the contents of the remaining three kinds of thought form the subject-matter of philosophy. We have accordingly three grades of philosophy, which may be called philosophy of the object, philosophy of the subject and philosophy of truth.

The object in science is understood as fact. By 'fact' is meant what is perceivable or has necessary reference to the perceivable, is speakable in the form of a literal judgment and is believed without reference to the speaking of it. Facts are spoken of as information; and the contents of pure thought are only *spoken* and are understood in necessary reference to the speaking of them. That is, they would be nothing for our consciousness unless we spoke or thought of them, whereas we believe in facts as quite unaffected by our speaking or thinking. The objects of philosophical thought are constituted by our speaking. Let us now see what they are and how they are so constituted.

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It should be clearly borne in mind that speaking is not merely uttering words, but always involves believing, which is sometimes equivalent to what may loosely be called, in common parlance, knowing. If the object of science or empirical thought is fact, which is independent of and unaffected by our speaking, i.e. thinking or knowing (in a loose sense), and the object of philosophy or pure thought is altogether different from fact, being constituted by our speaking, i.e. thinking or knowing (in a loose sense), then we see at once that philosophical activity is altogether distinct from scientific activity. Philosophy is an affair of pure thought, and the object of pure thought, not being a fact or what is derivable from the world of fact, must have its proper place in thought and be imbedded therein. The contents of philosophical thought thus appear to be not only capable of being developed out of the depth of our consciousness, but require to be so developed, and not gathered from any outside source. Krishnachandra seems to elaborate this basic idea in his own way.

Fact is always expressed in a judgment of the form 'A is thus related to B', this being the only form of judgment that is literally intelligible. Fact is always a fact related to other facts. If anywhere, 'X is' means some thing other than a relational assertion of the above form, it means X is self-subsistent, real or true, which is only an apparent judgment.

We shall learn, by and by, the precise meanings given by Krishnachandra to the terms—self-subsistent, reality and truth. For the present, we may take self-subsistent to mean pure object, without any subjective entanglement or sensible character, and understand reality as what is revealed to us when we say 'I am', and truth as what is real in an absolute (i.e. neither objective nor subjective) sense. Roughly speaking, self-subsistent, reality and truth

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mean respectively what is taken to be metaphysically real, objectively, subjectively and transcendently (i.e. neither subjectively nor objectively).

Thus 'X is real' may serve as a representative general form for the judgments, 'X is self-subsistent', 'X is real' and 'X is true'. And Krishnachandra would take 'X is real' as no real judgement but an apparent one. The predicate does not, as in a judgement proper, amplify or explicate the meaning of a subject that is already believed. The subject is understood as presupposing the predicate. We cannot assert anything about X unless we take it to be real. We already know what is meant by anything being real. When we assert 'X is real', we understand that 'real' is specified or determined as X. For understanding 'real' or 'X being real', we need make no fresh appeal to sense experience. It is in this sense perhaps that Krishnachandra says that the subject is believed as self-evident elaboration of the predicate that is already believed to be self-evident. Philosophy is such self-evident elaboration of the self-evident, and is not a body of judgments. Philosophy is traditionally understood to give us the knowledge of reality or truth. That is, in philosophy, we should ultimately be able to say 'X is real' or 'X is true'. And this, as we have just seen, would be no judgement proper, but an elaboration or specification of the self-evident. The elaboration itself is said to be self-evident, because we achieve it by pure thinking or *a priori* without any appeal to experience. That philosophy is not a body of judgements should be clear from the further reason that all genuine judgements are possible only in the sphere of empirical thought which gives us science and regulates commonsense, but is not proper in philosophy, as it is conceived here.

Now the self-evident is only spoken and not spoken of, and there are three forms of it according as it is spoken

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in the objective (self-subsistent), subjective (real or spirit) or transcendental (truth or absolute) attitude. The difference between the first two forms is the difference between the imports of the two apparent judgements, 'The object (in general) is' and 'I am'. In a judgment proper, 'A is thus related to B', if, the word 'is' by itself means anything, if, i.e., the assertion means any content more than 'A related to B', the content as isolated would be objectivity. It may be expressed in an apparent judgment 'the relation between A and B is'. In a judgment proper, the word 'is' expresses only the objective attitude of the speaker, but in this apparent judgment, 'is' means an objective content which is self-subsistent but not fact. To express and formulate this content is still to retain the objective attitude. The attitude is explicitly dropped in saying 'I am'. The content here is also spoken and not spoken of, but it is explicitly understood as not objective, as only apparently objective. What the word 'am' means is not contemplated in the objective attitude but is subjectively enjoyed and only spoken as though it were objectively contemplated.* The subjective is a positive entity through which the objective is understood. The concept of the object is not reached through a generalisation of the objective facts of science. Were it not for the direct consciousness and speakability of the subject, the concept of the object would not have been formed at all.

The judgment 'A is thus related to B' may be denied in the form 'That A is related to B is not fact'. 'That A is so

* I think it was the English philosopher Alexander who first made the distinction between contemplation and enjoyment as two distinct ways of knowing proper for an independent object and a subjective state respectively. We contemplate an object but we enjoy a subjective state. Krishnachandra appears to take these terms from him, but use them in his own way.

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related to B' is no judgment, but what is nowadays called a proposition. The enunciation and denial of it are possible, because we have already a belief in the self-subsistent. If the proposition is understood as not fact, it is because we cannot deny its self-subsistence.

I believe the idea of subsistence was first developed in modern philosophy in connection with propositions which could be true or false, even when nobody asserted them, and so could not be identified with subjective states or objective facts and share their existence, and still had to have some sort of being distinct from existence. Such being is subsistence. Krishnachandra seems to have taken the idea of subsistence from propositional subsistence, but he has changed it into self-subsistence, because the subsistent is regarded as independent of any subject or his thinking. However, the self-subsistent, for Krishnachandra, is not merely propositional, but anything conceivable purely in the objective way, whether a proposition, a universal or a thing-in-itself, of course, free from any sensible, spatial or temporal character. The self-subsistent seems to stand for what we take to be metaphysically real, objectively speaking.

Now, just as fact may be denied, we may also deny the self-subsistent in the form 'object is not', meaning what is other than the subjective is not a definite self-identical content for contemplation—a recognised philosophical view that is not *prima facie* meaningless. The denial is possible, because we already believe in the subjective as enjoyed reality.

We may also deny the subjective in the form 'I (as individual subject) am not'. This too is *prima facie* intelligible, and it represents a new grade of negation. Even as individual, the I is enjoyingly believed and the denial of such a content is possible because we have already the

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notion of truth or absolute, beyond reality or subjectivity. Denial or negation is possible only on the basis of something positive. We may deny fact, because we believe in the self-subsistent or pure object. We may deny the object, because we believe in the subjective reality. We may also deny the subject, because we believe in truth which is neither objective nor subjective but absolute.

We have thus three definite contents for philosophical study, viz. self-subsistent object, real subject and transcendental truth, and so three grades of philosophy, dealing with these, respectively called philosophy of the object, philosophy of the subject and philosophy of truth.

Before we attempt to say something on each of these grades of philosophy, we may try to make Krishnachandra's position in regard to science, as contrasted with philosophy, a little clearer.

He readily acknowledges that science alone speaks in genuine judgements, the content of which is fact, intelligible without reference to speaking, and is alone actually known and literally thought. Philosophy deals with contents that are not thinkable and are not actually known, but are believed as demanding to be known without being thought.

Supposing we use the form of judgment 'X is' to express the different kinds of philosophical contents; then, in the case of contemplative thought, X would mean the self-subsistent and 'is' would mean objectivity, but the judgment-form would be only apparent or symbolical, it being no real judgment, as the predicate is already presupposed in the subject, and does not, as in a judgement proper, amplify the notion of the subject. In the case of enjoying thought, X would mean the subject, but the predicate would be only symbolical, because *is* which

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means objectivity cannot be literally true of the subject. In the case of transcendental thought, even X would be symbolical, because we cannot literally speak unless we are in the objective or subjective attitude. Truth or absolute can be spoken only symbolically. But although these philosophical contents are not literally thinkable and are not actually known, they are not chimeras, which should be thrown overboard. In Krishnachandra's view, they are believed as demanding to be known without being thought. This he takes to be a spiritual demand which need not have any necessary origin.

We have already seen that the content of philosophic thought has necessary reference to the speaking of it, i.e., is believed and understood as it is spoken. It is believed, however, as self-evident or independent of any individual mind. As understood in the objective attitude, the self-evident is the self-subsistent. Fact in science is not believed as self-evident, depending as it does on our sense-perception and drawing heavily upon our believing attitude, and so we cannot take it as what would be even if no one believed it. The self-subsistent is a concept of philosophy. Science has no interest to formulate this concept; it apparently believes that the object must be knowable or usable. The self-subsistence of the object implies that the object may be in its very nature inaccessible to the mind. To science there is nothing in the object to make it known; it is just what is known, and though it may be unknown, there is no question of its being unknowable. The implicit faith of science is that the object is knowable and usable as of right. This belief is at least questioned in philosophy, to which it is an expression of solipsistic self-sufficiency on the part of the subject. It is this wrong spiritual attitude of science towards the object that suggests the need for a

speculative theory of the object. The concept of self-subsistent object is the first corrective that philosophy offers of the predatory outlook of the scientific intellect.

Philosophy of the Object

Philosophy deals with the object that is intelligible only in reference to the subject. By subject is meant the individual subject or I, which is understood in the theoretic consciousness as the speaking function that is symbolised by itself as spoken. I or the subject is ordinarily taken to be the speaker or knower. But we never discover the knower. What is realisable in our consciousness is knowing only which is described here as the speaking function. I am really this speaking function, but I call myself as I. This I as spoken represents or symbolises the speaking function which in reality is myself.

Philosophy formulates and elaborates the concept of the self-subsistent object. What is common to such object and scientific fact is objectivity, which is itself no fact, being only the circumstance of being understood in the objective attitude. This is just the form of the object, the self-subsistent form, that is studied in logic. It is indeed the form of spoken fact, but as it is the form of the self-subsistent object also, it cannot be said to have necessary reference to fact or the perceivable. Logic, as the study of this form, is thus no science, but a branch of the philosophy of the object.

The form itself is a pure object and is also the form of pure object. The pure object, of which logic is the form or shadow, is the metaphysical object. The two branches of the philosophy of the object are then logic and metaphysics.

The concept of the object is reached in the first instance by contrast with the subject as the self-evident

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content of the spiritual (i.e. subjective) consciousness. It is in the theoretic consciousness of the spiritual grade that one is first explicitly conscious of the object as such. In the consciousness of *I am*, one appreciates the objective attitude of judgment as distinct from the enjoying attitude. The consciousness of the asserted being (*am*) or object as such here emerges as the consciousness of a necessary symbol of the subject *I*. One may be conscious of the object without being explicitly conscious of the subject, but the object has no meaning except as the negation and the symbol of the subject. Object means in the first instance what the subject is not and is thus the negation of the subject. *I* cannot be conscious of myself or the subject without asserting *I am*, but *am*, as we have already seen, means objectivity, and objectivity cannot be identified with the subject and has therefore to be treated as a symbol of the subject. As we cannot be conscious of the subject except as asserting *I am*, the object is to be regarded as the necessary symbol of the subject, even though it is also the negation of the subject.

Now it is a common experience that a symbol and the thing which it symbolises do not often appear as quite distinct and different in our consciousness. The material stuff, which is worshipped as the image of the goddess Kali, is treated by ordinary folks as the goddess herself. In a similar case with the object, when the reference to the the subject, of which it is but a symbol, is only implicit and not clearly realised, it appears as the immediacy of the subject, i.e. as one with it and is accepted as real without any question about it. Reality, in the first instance and without any question, is realised in our consciousness of the self or subject. And our sense of reality gets easily transferred to the object when its symbolical character and reference to the subject are only implicit and not clearly kept in view.

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Objectivity or the form of the object is intelligible in reference to the object that is taken to be implicitly real or what is called the metaphysical object. Logic, which is a study of the forms of objectivity or self-subsistent object, thus presupposes metaphysics.

Fact and the self-subsistent are both spoken literally and in both the believed content is figured by being spoken. Fact is understood as independent of this figuration, while the self-subsistent is presented as constituted by it. What is common to these spoken contents is the speech-created form. There are accidental forms of speech, but there are also certain structural forms that are unavoidable in the communication of belief, and which are believed to belong to the understood content and not to the speech only. The unavoidable forms of speech (which may perhaps be treated as categorial characters) are constitutive of the meaning of the object. Logic presents a system of speech-created forms of meaning. There may be alternative systems, for logic presupposes metaphysics which presents alternative theories. The fundamental disputes in logic are unavowed metaphysical disputes. Metaphysical disputes are not settled by logic, for apparently every metaphysical system has its distinctive logic.

The suspicion, that the subject is not believed in the same sense as the metaphysical object, does not arise within metaphysics which is unaware of the distinction between the self-subsistent and the real. The distinction is suggested by a contrast of logic with metaphysics. The forms of meaning as discussed in logic are a kind of entity that must be said to be believed in, but it would be absurd to say that they are real. They are believed in as not real and yet not nothing, i.e. as self-subsistent.

Philosophy of Spirit

The suggested distinction between self-subsistence and reality is explicitly verified in the spiritual or enjoying

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consciousness of objectivity as a symbol for the real subject. In *I am*, *am* meaning self-subsistent being as understood in the objective attitude is the symbol of *I* as understood in the subjective attitude. Enjoying understanding of a content is the consciousness of it as symbolised by an objectively contemplated meaning. Without such symbolism, the subject would be enjoyed, but not enjoyingly understood. It is not only understood like the self-subsistent in necessary reference to the speaking of it, it is understood further as symbolised by its spoken form. This enjoying is what we mean or should mean by introspection. Introspection proper is a form of theoretic consciousness that means an abjuration (or surrender) of the objective attitude. Its content is neither fact nor self-subsistent object. The content is *I* or implies *I*, and although it is spoken as though it were an object, it is understood as what the object is not, as the speaking subjectivity. To introspect is actually or ideally to speak in the first person. To speak in the first person may not be to be explicitly conscious of the *I* as what the object is not. When it involves such consciousness it amounts to introspection.

The subject *I* is never accepted by itself in introspection. Something else is always enjoyed along with the subject and enjoyed in reference to it. This may be of three grades. There is in the first place the explicit consciousness of the subject as *unaccountably* embodied. Next, there is the consciousness of personal relation to other selves. Last, there is the consciousness of the overpersonal self. The overpersonal self is enjoyingly understood, not only in reference to the subject *I*, but as implying the specific experience of communion, the felt form of identity with the *I*. Such enjoying identity is what is called concrete identity or identity in difference, a relation that is unintelligible in the objective attitude. The

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consciousness of the overpersonal self as one with the *I* is the religious form of spiritual consciousness. The study of all contents enjoyed in explicit reference to the subject *I* may be called the philosophy of the spirit.

Philosophy of Truth

In religion there can be no theoretic denial of the subject *I*. In worship the subject abnegates itself, but the abnegation, there, is an affair of enjoyed being and not of theory. There is however a theoretic consciousness of *I am not*, of the possibility at any rate of the subject or the individual self being unreal. The denial of *I* is possible because we already believe that the absolute is. The absolute is not the same as the overpersonal reality that is enjoyed in religion. It means what the subject is not; but the reality of religious experience, while it is enjoyed and symbolised by *I*, does not mean such theoretic negation of *I*. What is called the absolute is a positively believed entity that is only negatively understood. Reality as apprehended in religion is indeed symbolised by *I*, but so far as it is a self, it is expressed literally. The positive character of the absolute however is expressed only by the negation of *I*, by what *I am not*, and as such is not literally expressible at all. If then we say that the absolute is, we mean by *is* not reality but truth. Reality is enjoyed, truth is not. The consciousness of truth as what is believed in but not understood either in the objective or in the subjective attitude, as not literally speakable, but speakable only in the purely symbolistic way, is the extra-religious or transcendental consciousness.

Reality or spirit is still literally speakable and may be taken to depend on the speaking for its revelation. Truth is believed or revealed as independent of it, as self-revealing, what is true being spoken as what the speaking *I* is not. At the same time, to be even *I* is but a symbol,

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and therefore nought in itself, it has nothing to be distinguished from and is absolute. If truth as absolute is distinguished, it is distinguished from itself. By a subtle argument which is rather difficult to follow, Krishnachandra tries to make out that the absolute through self-distinction reveals itself as absolute truth or absolute freedom or absolute value. There is no sense in speaking of the absolute as the unity of truth, freedom and value. It is each of them, these being only spoken separately, but not meant either as separate or as one. As examples of these alternative absolutes from history of philosophy, he refers to the Vedantic absolute as truth, the Buddhist absolute as freedom and the Hegelian absolute as value.

The account we have given above of Krishnachandra's conception of philosophy is no doubt very inadequate, but is not, we hope, misleading. It is in fact largely a paraphrase of his paper on 'The Concept of Philosophy', in which I have taken the liberty of interpolating liberally my own interpretations of certain of his very terse and cryptic statements.

We have already referred to the fact that 'What is philosophy?' is a philosophical problem, and like other philosophical problems this problem too is solved differently by different philosophers in accordance with, and in terms of, their own philosophies. It is not, therefore, to be expected that Krishnachandra's conception of philosophy will be shared by other philosophers. Still we can point out certain obvious merits of Krishnachandra's conception of philosophy.

In the first place, he has been able to separate the field of philosophy entirely from that of science. It is a great relief to a student of philosophy to know that in order to pursue philosophy proper, he need not be acquainted

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with the methods or results of scientific enquiries, and that the subject which claims his highest devotion is not a handmaid to some other discipline like science or theology. Krishnachandra does not however minimise the value of science. In fact he even concedes that knowledge is actually to be had only in science. Ordinarily, both science and philosophy are regarded as affairs of knowledge, and it becomes very difficult to distinguish properly between scientific work and philosophical work. Philosophers have claimed that they alone know reality or the whole of it, while scientists know only appearance or a mere part of reality. Scientists, on the other hand, claim that they have all possible and real knowledge of reality, whereas philosophers are content with mere speculations or sham knowledge. One who has not already joined either camp, but is intelligent, and desirous of knowledge for its own sake, is confused by such divergent claims and cannot possibly decide whom to follow. Krishnachandra has succeeded in making the distinction between science and philosophy quite clear, first by making their fields of study separate and distinct, and then by granting that science gives us actual knowledge and we have literal thinking in science, while in philosophy we have only symbolical thinking and no actual knowledge, although both science and philosophy are affairs of theoretic consciousness.

Secondly, in his conception of philosophy, Krishnachandra seems to have provided for the so-called branches of philosophy which are usually studied at our universities in the name of philosophy. Logic and metaphysics find their place in his philosophy of the object. Psychology (philosophical, not experimental), Ethics and Philosophy of Religion seem to be included in his philosophy of the subject or spirit, which studies the self, first as embodied, then in relation with other selves and lastly, in relation with the overpersonal self or God.

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Lastly, he seems to have succeeded in making mysticism appear quite respectable by removing its antirational character. He has not only included it in philosophy, but has made philosophy culminate in it, and thus has shown a rational way of approach to it. What he describes as philosophy of truth appears to us nothing short of mysticism.

We have already conceded that other philosophers may not find Krishnachandra's conception of philosophy quite acceptable. Even we who have been anxious to learn from him have our own difficulties with it.

There is a preliminary difficulty which arises from the fact that Krishnachandra's conception of philosophy appears to be peculiarly his own and is not exemplified either in the courses of studies followed in our universities in the departments of philosophy or largely in the history of philosophy. Although the title of his paper 'The Concept of Philosophy' leads us to expect that we shall find in it an acceptable definition of philosophy as such, what he has actually given us is a conception of what philosophy, in his opinion, ought to be or what he himself practises as a philosopher. That is, we have here a conception of Krishnachandra's philosophy and not a conception of philosophy as such. Perhaps this is unavoidable in philosophy.

Our real difficulty begins when we try to follow the different steps of his main argument. He has tried, it seems, to lead us from the conception of fact to that of self-subsistent or pure object, and then we are made to pass from the conception of pure object to that of the subject or spirit or reality, and then ultimately to ascend to the conception of truth or absolute. We rise from one stage to

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another by way of denial. Facts can be denied only on the basis of the self-subsistent object, and object can be denied, because we believe in the self or subject, and the self too can be denied and that is possible because we have faith in truth or absolute. This seems to be Krishnachandra's version of Vedantic *neti marga* or *via negativa*.

Our difficulty is that once we start with fact, we do not see how we can get rid of it or get beyond it. Facts no doubt are sometimes denied, but only particular facts. One particular fact is denied in favour of some other fact. There is no possible occasion to deny all facts or facts as such. When we deny a particular fact, we fall back upon some other fact or refer to a subjective idea. Perhaps Krishnachandra will admit that for a scientific mind denial of fact as such is impossible.

Since all our facts are clothed with sensible characters, it is possible, we admit, to conceive of the pure object as free from such characters, as a thing-in-itself or essence or universal. But how to rise to the conception of the subject from that of the object? Krishnachandra refers to the philosophical position '*object is not*' which he says is not meaningless, and it is meaningful, he says further, because we already believe in the subjective as enjoyed reality. He is, of course, not saying that we derive our idea of the subject from that of the object. He holds rather the opposite view. He is only maintaining that any possible denial of the object implies a prior faith in the subject. Our difficulty is that we do not see how meaningful theoretic denial of the object is possible. It is not enough to refer to a recognised philosophical position, e.g. Advaita Vedanta. The question is whether that position is really intelligible.

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We readily accept that there is an objective attitude in which we contemplate the object, as well as a subjective attitude in which we enjoy the subjective reality. We can meaningfully talk of the object when we are in the objective attitude; but being in that attitude, can we really deny the object? The very objective attitude cannot be maintained without the support of the object. In the subjective attitude, there is no sense of the object which can be either affirmed or denied. The attitude of knowledge seems to be entirely objective and so the denial of the object within the sphere of knowledge, i.e. theoretically, does not seem possible at all.

We may however recognise the subjective as well as the objective as contrasted aspect of reality, of which we become aware in characteristic different attitudes. Krishnachandra is not content with this mere contrast between the subject and the object. For him, the subject has a positive self-sufficient meaning which is denied to the object. He says that the object has no meaning whatever except as the negation and symbol of the self, it means that the object is nothing in itself. Being nothing in itself, can it be an other or a symbol to something else? Krishnachandra makes out ingeniously that in asserting *I am*, we are using objectivity (*am*) as a symbol of the subject. But objectivity here need not mean objectivity in Krishnachandra's sense, as contrasted with subjectivity, but may mean objectivity in the sense of self-subsistent reality. It is probably objectivity in this sense that is asserted in all judgment, including judgments about ourselves. Krishnachandra himself admits that metaphysics is not aware of the distinction between self-subsistence and reality, and one may therefore be excused if one thinks that in saying *I am*, one is genuinely asserting reality of

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the self and not merely speaking symbolically of the self as objective.

In any case, we are somehow in clear possession of the subjective; but how are we to rise to the notion of absolute truth? Krishnachandra refers to the experience of self-abnegation or *I am not* of certain religious people. I can of course think of myself as being of no importance and say I am nothing, but I can never think of myself as being in fact sheer nothing. My non-being is never a conceivable content of thought for me, and, as such, can never be asserted. The self is indissolubly bound up with all thinking and knowing, and when the self is left out, we seem to take leave of all thought and knowledge and plunge ourselves in mysticism. If I could deny myself and say truthfully 'I am not', I should have had to admit some awareness of non-subjective reality to provide the basis for this denial. But since I cannot literally deny the self, the way to absolute truth beyond subjectivity (and objectivity) seems blocked for me.

It is true that we can think of our absence, e.g. both before and after our earthy career. But there are two points to be noted here. First when I think of myself as absent, I think of the objective world as remaining as it is, i.e. as it is presented to me now. This means I substitute for myself a bodiless onlooker to give meaning and significance to the world. In other words, I leave my ghost to perform my function as subject. Secondly, the objective world being there, my physical absence can well be significant on the basis of it. But when the objective world is already annulled, and the ghostly subject is also dismissed, there remains no foothold for my thought and imagination. We seem to be left with nothing but the empty absolute of mystic trance.

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Krishnachandra will not probably object to it, because he believes in knowing without thinking, in some form of realisation in which both subject and object are absent.

We hoped to enter into the heart of philosophy under Krishnachandra's guidance, but he seems to have cleverly led us out of it. Perhaps this is a consummation devoutly to be wished by a transcendental philosopher, and we should be content to know that philosophy attains its end by ending itself.*

* Years ago, I wrote a book entitled 'The Philosophy of Whitehead', in which I tried to give an exposition of the main philosophical ideas of Whitehead, ending with a chapter, in which I pointed out certain inherent difficulties of those ideas as I conceived them. At my request, Krishnachandra with his characteristic kindness went through the book, and remarked at the end, 'Your last chapter shows you have not properly understood or appreciated what you have written earlier'. I do not remember his exact words, but this is what he seemed to imply. If he saw my present essay, I feel almost sure he would have made the same remark. If any faithful follower of Krishnachandra's philosophy chances to read this essay and repeats the charge, I hope I shall have the grace to plead guilty to it, even though I believe a fair objective presentation of a philosophical position to be quite possible without subjective acceptance.

23 FACT, THOUGHT AND EXISTENCE.

Professor K.C. Bhattacharya enjoys the reputation of being an acute thinker and an abstruse writer. Whenever he writes on any philosophical topic, he is sure to say something important which has not been said elsewhere, at least in modern philosophy. It is a pity that the views of such a thinker have not been discussed, or even generally known, in philosophical circles. For this, probably, the second part of his reputation is partly responsible. And, really, his writing is not such as he who runs may read and understand. But the difficulty of his writings does not proceed, as might sometimes be supposed from an unusual use of terms and expressions. It is due, in my opinion, to other causes. His thoughts, it appears to me, are clear and his language, although concise, is also pointed, and still if we do not understand him readily, it is because the hard and solid thinking, he brings to bear on any subject he treats of, gets reflected in the language he uses and so his language becomes impenetrable to those who will not struggle with it to get at his meaning. It is not so easy to be lucid and clear when one says something substantial after deep and serious thinking on a difficult theme. There are only few writers who can give lucid expression even to their difficult thoughts. Professor Bhattacharya is not one of them. But I am sure if we take some pains and make a genuine effort to understand him we shall not fail to find out his meaning. This has at least been my experience with his recent article, 'Fact and the thought of Fact', published in the last January issue of the *Philosophical Quarterly*. I propose to discuss here some of the questions he has raised in his article, not so much with the view of exhibiting my mental reactions to his ideas as to make his views known to other students of philosophy who may not have read his article or may not even have time or patience to struggle with his writing.

D.E.C.

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Let me begin by giving a brief summary of the article. In the opinion of Prof. Bhattacharya, fact means what is believed and what a person believes is a fact, to him. The term fact thus does not admit of any impersonal definition. Fact need not be merely what exists, because people believe in the non-existence of many things, as also in the moral ought or freedom which cannot be said to exist or not to exist. These however have to be taken as facts because they are believed.

We can *think* of a fact only when it is a possible existent, i.e. something of which there is an actual question of existence or non-existence. A thing, which has no reference to existence, cannot be an object of thought, although it may not be altogether meaningless. The false, or the unreal is no fact and although we may significantly speak of the false, we cannot think of it, just as we cannot think of the contradictory, because we entertain no question of existence about it. We assert existence or non-existence only of that which we take to be a possible existent. To say that a thing exists or that it does not exist is to imply that the thing in question is a possible existent. We can very well think of such a thing. But we cannot even say of the false that it does not exist, for to assert non-existence of a thing is to take it as a possible existent and the false is not taken as a possible existent (by the person who believes it to be false).

What is rejected as false need not be a proposition at least in the case of illusory perceptions. The illusory may be spoken of either as false or as unreal, although the term unreal is wider in meaning than the term false. The unreal is that which is not believed and of whose existence there is no question. The false is that which was once believed but is now disbelieved and about which there is now no question, although such a question could be asked

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of it when it was believed. When we withdraw our belief in the existence of a thing which we have found to be false the withdrawal is only partial. We still believe in some existence. All negative assertions imply belief in some positive fact, and when we assert anything to be false, we do not suppose that there are no facts at all. That there is some fact is never denied, although we may not know it definitely. The bare object or objectivity in general is never questioned. We can assert it, although we cannot properly think it. The subjective fact is also not questioned but we cannot assert it. What is asserted is always distinguished from our believing of it. But just as a disbelieved content cannot be distinguished from our disbelieving, the spiritual fact or self-conscious subjectivity, is not distinguishable, though not identical with, our believing. Objectivity generally although not questioned intellectually, may still admit of some spiritual doubt or question. We may doubt whether it is real at all as distinguished from the spiritual fact (consciousness). About the self-evidencing spiritual fact no such doubt is even possible.

It seems that according to Professor Bhattacharya the highest category is that of the speakable which can be divided into fact and no-fact. In the class of no-fact we have the false, the imaginary and the contradictory. These no-facts are all unthinkable. The class of fact may be divided into the thinkable and the unthinkable. That which is determinately known as a possible existent is a thinkable fact which can be further determined as either existent or non-existent. The unthinkable is divided into the assertible and the unassertible. The bare object or the indeterminate possible existent is the unthinkable assertible and the self-evidencing spiritual fact the unthinkable unassertible. These last two are not however co-ordinate facts and we cannot assert their unity or duality.

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It is impossible to give an idea of the penetrating subtlety of Professor Bhattacharya's thoughts in a bald summary like the one I have attempted above. However, I hope this summary, inadequate as it is, will be helpful in following the discussion which I now wish to raise on some of the questions he has dealt with in his paper.

The first question is about the definition of fact. He says that fact means what is believed. I wonder in what sense he takes the word 'means' here. If we take anything to be a fact, we naturally believe in it. So in this sense a fact may mean what is believed just as a fall from a tree may *mean* the fracture of one's bones. But can we literally identify the meaning of 'fact' with the meaning of 'what is believed'? There are many erroneous beliefs and we cannot suppose that the objects of those beliefs can ever attain the status of facthood by being merely believed. What a person believes may be taken by him to be a fact but to *be* a fact and to *be taken* as a fact are not the samething. A no-fact may be (mis) taken as a fact but it will not be a fact on that account.

Moreover, although we believe what we take to be a fact, we can never suppose that it is a fact, because we believe it. We always think that we believe it because it is a fact. Has not the term 'fact' by itself a meaning? Can belief, which after all is a psychological fact, form any part of the meaning of fact as such?

Professor Bhattacharya has criticised certain objective definitions and we may agree with his criticism. This only means that those definitions are wrong or that no objective definition is possible. But this can never mean that a subjective definition will serve the purpose. We are persuaded that fact is an indefinable concept. To define is to distinguish and characterise. As facts only exist we can not distinguish facts from other things which are not facts.

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We have therefore to understand the meaning of fact without any definition. I am afraid that by giving a subjective definition we shall falsify our very notion of fact.

The second question which I wish to raise is whether the scope of thought should be so restricted as to allow it nothing but the possible existent as its object. But really can we not think of anything without a reference to its existence? Professor Bhattacharya maintains that incompatibility, or at least, contradiction, is no proper thought content. How do we then decide, if not by thought, whether a fact is or is not compatible with another? When we say that the character of being a crow and whiteness are not incompatible, do we not make compatibility an object of our thought? If compatibility is an object of our thought, why is not its absence, incompatibility or contradiction, an object of thought also? Contradiction is known by us and we cannot say that it is nothing. The question is how we are able to find it out if we cannot make it an object of thought. A contradictory thought may be no thought but we cannot say that that which finds contradiction is also no thought. I find that I do not perceive or otherwise intuit contradiction but can know it only by thinking. Prof. Bhattacharya grants that contradiction has some meaning and is a significant speakable but he says that it is not a thinkable. But can we distinguish a speakable from a thinkable? A speakable is not surely decided to be so merely by speaking. If no operation of thought accompanied our speaking there would be really no speaking at all and nothing would be known as a speakable even. How could we discuss the speakable if it were not also thinkable.

Evidently by a thought-content Prof. Bhattacharya means a content which is believed to be an existent. And so the contradictory or the unreal, which is not believed

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to exist, cannot in his opinion be an object of thought. But in this connexion, I think, one might as well hold that thought has no reference to existence at all. Existence is not a predicate which can be affirmed or denied by thought. We can only think of definite, distinguishable characters of things and not of their existence or non-existence. (1) 'A exists' or (2) 'A does not exist' is not a proposition at all. To have an assertible character is to be distinguished from it, and nothing can be distinguished from existence and so existence cannot, be an assertible character. In (1) the meaning of 'exists' is already contained in 'A' and we do not need to proceed beyond 'A' to the assertion 'A exists'. In (2) since 'A' does not exist we cannot even begin the assertion. In either case we do not have a thinkable proposition. In the so-called question, Does shell-silver exist? the real question is not about the existence of shell-silver (because there is no such thing), but about whether the piece of shell is a piece of silver. When we ask 'Does God exist?', we do not desire to know whether the entity called God has the character of existence. What we want to ascertain is whether among the existing entities there is any which possesses the character of godhead as conceived by us. From this point of view, therefore, it will not be true to say that only that about which there is an actual question of existence (the possible existent) can be an object of thought, because there is nothing about which the question of existence is raised.

Or one might say that we can think of the existent alone. There is no real thinking without assertion. To be asserted is to be taken as existent. We cannot think of anything as a mere possible existent. We may not definitely know whether a thing exists or does not exist. But if we are to think of it, we must either think of it as existent or reject it as non-existent. 'Possible existence' which also may be 'no existence' is no real character of things. A possible existent is therefore no fact of reality and so it cannot be a proper content of objective thought.

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Professor Bhattacharya says that the possible existent is further determined as either existent or non-existent. Is there then really a class of possible existents comprising of the existent and the non-existent? There are only existents and the class, which must have non-existents also, is not a real class at all. So the possible existent which cannot be asserted as real, cannot be an object of thought. We should therefore believe either that thought has no reference to existence or that the existent alone is thought. The possible existent as such is not known to thought.

Professor Bhattacharya makes a distinction between the false and that of which existence is denied in an ordinary negative judgment. He says that there is no question of existence about the false whereas the assertion of non-existence still implies the question of existence. To the question 'Is not the false a possible existent?' Professor Bhattacharya replies that the person who asserts a thing to be false does not take it to be a possible existent and has no undecided question of existence about it. To me however the distinction does not seem to be clear. In actual thinking we assert non-existence only of the false, i.e., of that which presented itself as real to us. So ordinarily the false is not different from that of which existence is denied. As for the question of existence, I think, the person, who says 'A does not exist', has no longer any question of existence about A (because it is already settled by the assertion of non-existence), quite in the same way as the person who declares a thing to be false has no question of existence about the latter. If you say that there was a question of existence which led to the negative judgment, we may reply that a similar question was present before the declaration of falsehood also. If the false is not a possible existent, the non-existent as non-existent is not also a possible existent.

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Professor Bhattacharya has objected to the distinction that is sometimes made between the false (referring to propositions) and the unreal (referring to things). It is a question of definition and one may define one's terms according to one's convenience. But still I think it would be better to use the term false in connexion with knowledge and the term unreal in connexion with things. Things are neither true nor false, they can be real or unreal. It is only our knowledge which mistake one thing for another, that is false. The asserted character (in false knowledge) is merely absent where it is attributed. In saying that an illusory snake is false, we mean that our knowledge of a not-snake as a snake is false. So in our opinion what is denied in the declaration of falsehood is the truth of some knowledge which we should be able to put in the form of a proposition. Prof. Bhattacharya does not think that what is denied in the correcting judgment can be a proposition. When a stick is mistaken as a snake, the truth correcting judgment is not, as he rightly points out, 'this is not a snake', (which can be asserted of a chair or a table, which was not mistaken for a snake), but 'this snake is not a snake'. This he says is not a thinking denial of a proposition for the proposition 'this snake is a snake' cannot, he says, be denied. But is it really so? The proposition 'this snake is a snake' cannot be denied only when the word 'snake' has the same meaning both as the subject and as the predicate. But when we say 'this snake (apparent) is not a snake (real)' do we take the word 'snake' in the same sense in the two places? If it is not so, then there seems no hindrance to our denying the proposition 'this snake is a snake.'

The great merit of Professor Bhattacharya's writings seems to be that he brings within the range of philosophical possibility many obscure points of advaitism, which to ordinary thinking, appear quite unintelligible. He does not

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expressly speak in the name of advaitism but there is no denying the fact that the general drive of his writings is toward advaitic conclusions. This is very much so in the present article.

By reducing facts to matters of belief he helps on the reduction of the objective world to falsity, for a belief after all may turn out to be erroneous.

By saying that the question of existence is present in all affirmative and negative judgments does he mean to hint that the objective world about which alone such judgments are significant, enjoys at best a questionable existence?

The bare object, although not questioned is not a thinkable, according to him; so what is impossible within thought need not be impossible with regard to it. The objective world, according to advaitism, is neither real nor unreal. This idea of being neither real nor unreal appears to involve self-contradiction and therefore we think that it is not true of any fact. Professor Bhattacharya says that to be neither existent nor non-existent may be impossible for *thought* but need not be un-real. Indeed he says it may be true of a fact which goes beyond thought.

The advaitins have been comparing the world to an illusory appearance and telling us that it is similarly false. But we have always the doubt that although the snake may be false, the rope need not be so and that in one sweeping judgment of falsity all objects whatever cannot be included and condemned. Professor Bhattacharya has very much eased our difficulty by assuring us that the object in general cannot be doubted in secular or logical consciousness, although it may be an object of spiritual doubt. It may be spiritually realised as the self-symbolising function of the spirit but logically it cannot be doubted. All

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students of philosophy, therefore, have reason to be grateful to Professor Bhattacharya for his granting, I believe on behalf of advaitism, that the object in general cannot be questioned in logic and that it is not possible to *think* of any content as neither existent nor non-existent. If in philosophy we cannot go beyond what logic demands and can reasonably admit only those categories in terms of which we can *think* and if further, we have not got, or do not admit, or at least do not like to utilise, any spiritual consciousness other than the logical or thinking one, then for philosophy at least the advaitin's doubt in the reality of the world or his characterisation of it as neither real nor unreal is quite inadmissible. His views might be accommodated in some other conception of philosophy but not in the one we have just indicated.

24 WHITEHEAD'S VIEW OF PHILOSOPHY AND ITS METHOD

It is not of course expected of a person, who is not himself a philosopher or a student of philosophy, that he should know exactly what philosophy is, what its ends are and how it tries, or should try, to achieve those ends. But it is certainly expected of a philosopher that he should have a clear understanding of his own business. Now it may be a fact that a philosopher in every case has a definite idea of his work; but it is also a fact that different philosophers hold widely divergent views as regards the nature of their work and the method of its procedure. This is surely unfortunate. If each philosopher is right in his peculiar view of philosophy, from which other philosophers differ, then it means that philosophy as a definite branch of knowledge or a coherent body of knowledge does not exist, and that the name philosopher is not applied to these different persons in one definite sense of the term. But although it is certain that all the different views cannot be right, it cannot be said that none of them is right. The only difficult question is to decide which of them is right. But there is little possibility of our finding out the truest view of philosophy by a *priori* considerations. In fact no definition of philosophy, in the absence of any clear agreement as what philosophy is, can really be refuted. We can only discuss the different views and compare them with one another and it is very likely that in course of time some of them will cease to interest men and will become obsolete without undergoing any strictly logical refutation.

But when we do not exactly know what philosophy is, how can we even discuss a view about philosophy, seeing that we are provided here with no standard of judgment? This difficulty is real, if the aim of our discussion

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is to arrive at a decisive conclusion whether a particular view of philosophy is true. But when we discuss a particular view about philosophy, our aim may not be to know whether it is true or false, but simply to know what it actually means and implies. Besides, although there is no clear-cut definition of philosophy, which is acceptable to all, we have some rough idea of what philosophy generally speaks about. If we wish to make this idea more definite, we can probably do so only by trying to learn what eminent philosophers themselves think of the nature of their subject. When a philosopher has achieved great distinction in philosophy, it is always to be expected that he has a definite idea of his subject and if he chooses to speak about it, we can reasonably expect some welcome light from him.

Professor A.N. Whitehead is unquestionably one of the leading philosophers of the present day. He has done solid work in philosophy, and his view of philosophy, judged from every point of view, certainly deserves consideration and merits discussion (in the sense indicated above). He has at different places spoken of the nature and function of philosophy, and especially in the first chapter of his great book *Process and Reality* he has dealt with the subject somewhat at length, and recurred to it in his latest book *Adventures of Ideas* in a chapter on 'Philosophic Method'.

'Speculative philosophy' as defined by Whitehead 'is the endeavour to frame a coherent logical necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted.' We see at once from this definition that philosophy has to do with the intellectual construction of a scheme of ideas which will explain all facts of experience. But what is the meaning of explanation or 'interpretation' as Whitehead calls it? A fact is interpreted in the sense intended here, when it is shown as an instance

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of a general idea. Philosophy explains our experience when it exhibits every item of our experience, that is, everything of which we are conscious, as enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought as an instance of the general scheme of ideas which it has constructed. Thus the system of ideas has a theoretical and a practical side. It should not merely be entertained in theory but should also be capable of being applied to the facts of experience. On the theoretical side, the system should be coherent and logical. It should be coherent in the sense that it should constitute an interconnected whole so that no one of its important ideas should be capable of being abstracted from the rest. The different ideas in the system should presuppose one another, not in the sense of being definable in terms of one another, but in the sense that each is significant only in relation to the others. It is presupposed that every entity in the universe is what it is by virtue of its determinate place in the universe and cannot be conceived to have a being outside this universe. This character of the universe, as reflected in the scheme of ideas, is its coherence.

It should be logical in the sense that the scheme of ideas should be framed in accordance with the logical principle of self-consistency, and general logical notions should be illustrated in it and also the scheme should provide room for the principles of inference. It is not meant that logical principles are to be placed above philosophical notions and are to be regarded as the ultimate first principles. It is of course true that our philosophical ideas should not violate logical principles and should be framed according to them; but then the logical principles themselves should find their place in the general scheme of philosophical ideas.

On the empirical side the scheme should be applicable and adequate. It is applicable if some fact of our experience

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can be shown as an instance of the general scheme, and the scheme is adequate when it is applicable to every such fact. In other words, all facts which we have experienced and in which we can believe as actual or possible, should be interpretable in terms of the scheme. It should be universally valid, and in this sense the system of ideas may be regarded as necessary.

It is thus clear that metaphysical principles should be illustrated in all facts of our experience and there should be no facts which can be regarded as exceptions. It might appear that, the metaphysical principles being universal, we could elicit them from a study of any fact. But their very universality is a ground for our not being able find them out easily. We generally observe by the method of difference. What is found in one place and is not found in another easily attracts our attention. But what is to be found everywhere is apt to be missed by us. Thus we cannot easily discover metaphysical principles although they are present in all facts. The power of free imagination helps us in our philosophic discovery. In imagination we are not restricted by what we actually see. We may first imaginatively construct ideas which may afterwards be found present in actual facts. Many mathematical ideas were constructed in this way long before their application to physical reality was suspected. Moreover, we may imagine things which are not actual at all and thus get the requisite basis of difference for the better observation of actual facts. Thus we see that imagination is a valuable gift for the philosopher. Even the scientist cannot achieve anything of value without this gift. Mere empiricism without imaginative construction leads us nowhere.

But philosophy is not pure imagination. Philosophy requires imagination in the service of knowledge. In all imaginative constructions, such as are necessary in

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philosophy, we have to be strictly faithful to facts; we have to see that our imaginative constructions are illustrated in actual facts. Besides they should satisfy the rational tests of logical consistency and coherence. Empirical verification and logical consistency are the two supreme tests for the sanity of a philosophical scheme. Otherwise it would be indistinguishable from poetry and fiction.

What is said above represents only the ideal which philosophy tries to realise; but it is not to be supposed that any particular philosophy has realised or is likely to realise this ideal completely. From our present knowledge of the complexity of fact and the weakness of human intelligence, we can only suppose that we may approach the ideal nearer and nearer but it is vain to hope that we shall be able to realise the ideal completely. We cannot think of a final metaphysical scheme which will explain all facts completely without leaving anything further to be explained. As we see things at present, there is little likelihood of our attaining a stage when no further progress in philosophic generalisation will be necessary or possible. It seems there will be always materials at our disposal to call for better systematisation of our metaphysical scheme, for enlargement of its scope and increase in its logical rigour. This only means that philosophy, as it is viewed now, is assured of indefinite progress, if only requisite intelligence be forthcoming to carry on its work.

It is clear that Whitehead takes the ordinary method of scientific generalisation to be the method of philosophy. It is eminently rational and can be used by ordinary intelligence. One cannot of course use the method mechanically and become a great philosopher. No method by itself leads to any such result. We require insight and that cannot be provided by any method. But what we achieve by our insight should admit of rational presentation

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and application and be intelligible to ordinary understanding. Here Whitehead sets his face against all anti-intellectual intuitionisms which make the possession of some uncommon faculty a necessary qualification for discovering or understanding any philosophical truth.

Thus for Whitehead philosophy does not represent a peculiar kind of knowledge having a peculiar field of its own and differing essentially from scientific knowledge in its character and scope. But if the method of philosophy is essentially the method of science and if philosophic knowledge is not different in character from scientific knowledge, how is then philosophy at all different from science? We may readily admit that there is no essential difference in character between philosophic and scientific knowledge. Still what we learn from philosophy is not what we learn from the sciences. A particular science studies a particular set of facts in abstraction from other facts which may be related with them but being of a different kind do not fall within the scope of this science. Thus a special science is always limited in scope and studies facts in abstraction. There is no science which studies all facts, or at least, aims to arrive at principles that will be applicable to all facts. This work is reserved for philosophy. So the old saying that philosophy is the science of sciences may in a sense be true. Two objections may be raised. First, it may be asked, when the facts are studied by the different sciences, what is there left to be studied specially by philosophy? and, secondly, is it possible for anybody to study all facts?

Facts, we have said, are studied by the sciences under limited aspects. Thus the different sciences give us only the partial views of facts, and the partial views themselves cannot constitute the whole view unless they are properly synthesised and unified. So in order to give us a complete

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understanding of facts, the work of philosophy is necessary over and above the work of the sciences. The question now comes whether it is possible for any individual to study all the facts which are severally studied by the different sciences. It is obvious that no individual can study all the facts, but it is also true that one does not need to be acquainted with the detailed work of all the sciences in order to become a philosopher. A philosopher may study a few facts in order to arrive at his general conclusions, but these conclusions must be applicable to all facts. The material for philosophy as well as for science is supplied by experience. If the sciences give us reliable knowledge about the facts of experience — and they have no other aim—and if philosophy also is an interpretation of the same facts, then it can ill-afford to neglect the evidence of the sciences. It may be difficult to master what the different sciences have to say about the different aspects of reality which they study. But a philosophy, which is already familiar with such systematisations of facts as are found in different sciences, is likely to do more substantial work than one which ignores the work of the sciences or formulates its principles in defiance of their evidence. Moreover in philosophy we are concerned with ultimate generalities which are applicable to all facts, and we do not need to know facts in their particular character; and the ultimate conceptions, which any special science uses, are not, I suppose, many. So, I think, even to-day it is not an impossible task for a philosopher to acquaint himself, as Whitehead has done, with the broad general conceptions of different sciences, before he ventures upon any metaphysical constructions.

The method of philosophy then is the method of 'working hypothesis'. Whitehead calls it also the method of 'descriptive generalisation'. We tentatively formulate a general metaphysical scheme and the truth of the scheme

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depends on the success with which it can be used to interpret the facts of experience. The aim of philosophy is not to give us a peculiar intuition into some transcendental core of reality or to justify our belief in some supersensible entities accepted on faith, but merely to give the most general description of facts.

Whitehead has come to philosophy from mathematics and science and he has been able to point out certain defects in the methods of modern philosophy. Those of us who have been trained in the tradition of modern European philosophy can hardly think of them as defects. We should think it a good point in a philosopher that he starts with some propositions which are clear and distinct and are absolutely certain. It is sometimes supposed that real knowledge is that which cannot be doubted, and if philosophy is to give us real knowledge, it should start with some indubitable principle, for starting with doubtful premises, it can never arrive at indubitable conclusions. Whitehead boldly inverts the whole idea. He says that there are no irreformable, clear and distinct, absolutely certain first principles to start with. Clarity and certainty are gradually to be attained in our knowledge and they cannot characterise our starting points. This is evident from the method of working hypothesis which, according to Whitehead, philosophy embodies. When we frame a metaphysical hypothesis, we cannot initially be certain about its truth or very clear as to its exact significance. As the hypothetical scheme receives verification in empirical facts, we feel more and more certain about its truth and see more and more clearly its exact significance.

Modern philosophy has also erred, according to Whitehead, in regarding the five senses as the sole gates of our knowledge of the external world, and in relying exclusively upon introspection for the examination of

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experience. Through the senses we get the knowledge of the contemporary world as illustrated by the sense-data. We know nothing of its past or future, and entirely miss the all-important fact that the present is derived from the past. We should rather regard the whole body as the organ of knowledge. The environment is pressing itself upon the whole body and through indistinct bodily feelings we become directly aware of the causal derivation of the present from the past. Through the senses we know the world in 'presentational immediacy' and through the bodily feelings we know it in 'causal efficacy'. In the former mode we know the world merely as static, and it is only in the latter mode that we know the world as a causal process.

Introspection similarly gives undue prominence to some aspects of experience, relegating others into the background. The data of sensation are marked clearly but 'the compulsions and derivations which form the main stuff of experience' are not noticed in introspection. "In particular it rules out that intimate sense of derivation from the body, which is the reason for our instinctive identification of our bodies with ourselves." Thus through the senses and in introspection we do not find all our available experiences, and in order to discover the main categories, under which the facts of experience can be classified, we should examine experiences of all kinds whether normal or abnormal, physical or mental.

It is sometimes urged against philosophy that it is a curiously unprogressive branch of knowledge. While the sciences and other branches of knowledge are making rapid progress, we seem to be discussing in philosophy even to-day in the same inconclusive manner the eternal problems which Plato and Aristotle discussed. Whitehead does not share this pessimistic view about philosophy. He thinks that progress is possible and philosophy has actually progressed in the course of history. The different systems

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of philosophy which have appeared represent no doubt different views of reality, but they are not to be regarded as absolute alternatives equally to be condemned for their invalidity. They rather express 'a variety of general truths about the Universe', and we make progress towards a final view by co-ordinating and synthesising these partial truths. The chief error in philosophy, according to Whitehead, is its overstatement. Every system of philosophy expresses some truth about reality and the mistake lies in regarding this truth as the whole truth. And we find that the overstatement of one philosophy is corrected by the counter-statement of another philosophy. After we have heard a great philosopher, we see even the old problems in a new light and we can no longer regard them in the same old fashion. "Philosophy never reverts", says Whitehead, "to its old position after the shock of a great philosopher."

The main objection against philosophy, however, is that it serves no useful purpose. Those who urge this objection seem to think, as Bacon thought, that we should faithfully observe only particular facts and discover the laws governing them; but the broad generalisations and interpretations with which philosophy concerns itself are of no use for this purpose. But unfortunately there are no bare facts. The facts that we find are already viewed under the aspects of general concepts, and are found connected with their contemporaries and referring to a past and to a future. This means that the observation of facts itself is possible in the light of some interpretation and generalisation. In this sense nobody can avoid metaphysics, good or bad. Philosophy does not initiate interpretation but tries only to make it systematic.

There can be no arbitrary limit to generalisation, and every science rises to philosophy when it carries its generalisations beyond the limits of its particular sphere.

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Facts are never fully understood unless their place in the universe is truly seen. This can be done only by a systematic coherent interpretation. As we saw above, the truths of science, viewed absolutely in regard to reality, would be but half-truths. Philosophy serves a very useful purpose when it co-ordinates these half-truths of science and supplies the qualifications under which alone they can be regarded as true.

There has been purely scientific philosophy as well as philosophy with a religious appeal. Whitehead has the great distinction of making philosophy closely associated with both science and religion. He has thereby made philosophy a highly effective and useful activity of the human spirit. Our contact with reality is in the experience of particular facts and in the enjoyment of subjective being. Science arose out of the former and religion out of the latter. The demand for intellectual justification for the brute facts of experience is at the root of science. This demand and the corresponding devotion to truth are fit parallels of religious sentiments. Only in science we are concerned with objective facts and not with subjectivity which is the concern of religion. In religion we seek to realise in the particularity of feeling the general conceptions which can properly be provided by philosophy alone. Religious emotions find their justification in philosophic generalisations, and the philosophic generalisations find their illustration in religious feelings. Both philosophy and religion gain in content and depth by this mutual service. The conceptual scheme, provided by philosophy, may appear, in its abstract general character, almost valueless, but it acquires supreme value when it is grasped in the immediacy of a feeling, as we try to do in religion. The tendency towards abstract generalisation and the tendency towards emotional realisation are both present in the human spirit. They are somewhat opposed in character,

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dividing science from religion. Unless they are reconciled and fused together, life is sure to suffer from inner deficiency. Merely with science, we get knowledge without value and with unenlightened religion, we get value without truth. But the rational beings that we are, we can be satisfied with neither alone. Philosophy synthesises science and religion and confers value on our knowledge and reality on our value.

25 THE THEORY OF PERCEPTION IN WHITEHEAD*

There is an apparent simplicity about the fact of perception. We open our eyes and see things around us, and there appears nothing mysterious about the matter. But do we really see the things? Certain portion of the contemporary world appear no doubt illustrated by certain *sensa*, but that there are things, identified with these *sensa*, does not appear at all to be immediately given. But there is not the least doubt that whenever we apprehend certain *sensa*, we pass on to the things which stand behind, or are identified with, the *sensa*. When, for instance, we see a coloured shape, we at once say, it is a chair.

It may be supposed that we get to the notion of chair, from the perception of the colour and the shape, by means of inference. But the facts do not support this theory. It is only by a difficult train of reasoning that we can be led, if at all, from the apprehension of the coloured shape to the notion of the chair. Such highly intellectual operation is not possible in the case of lower animals. But even a dog on the apprehension of the coloured shape would at once take it to be a chair and behave towards it accordingly. This shows clearly that to get to the chair from the coloured shape one does not need to perform any such highly intellectual act as inference.

Moreover, although we ordinary people pass immediately to the idea of the chair from the apprehension of the coloured shape, an artist, who is trained in his profession, may stop at the contemplation of the beautiful colour and shape, and may not at once pass on to the idea of the chair. On the theory of inference, we have to

[In referring to his works the following abbreviations are used.]

PR = *Process and Reality*

AI = *Adventures of Ideas*

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suppose that the artist has been restrained from performing the inference by his elaborate artistic training. But one does not need to be trained merely to refrain from some difficult mental work. One naturally avoids such work even without any training. Thus it is clear that our transition from the apprehension of the coloured shape to the idea of the chair is not mediated or accompanied by any intellectual operation. Constituted as we are, we naturally pass on from the one to the other.

But to pass from the one to the other involves a process. We may legitimately ask what exactly is the process by which we get from the one to the other? And, further, if by sense-perception, we get the coloured shape only, how is it then possible to get to the notion of the chair which is not presented at all? We cannot pass from the given to the not-given except through inference, and inference is not allowed here. How does Whitehead answer these questions?

What is commonly called perception is described by him as symbolic reference. The coloured shape is used as the symbol for the chair, and when the coloured shape is given by sense-perception, we pass by symbolic reference from the coloured shape to the chair. But we can pass from the one to the other when the other is also given. If the other remains ungiven, how can we ever pass on to it? Whitehead here says that the chair is also given, as the coloured shape is given, but the two are not given in the same way. We get them in two different modes of perception. In this connexion Whitehead develops his theory of the two pure modes of perception, called the mode of presentational immediacy and the mode of causal efficacy, whose synthesis in a mixed mode constitutes symbolic reference to our ordinary perception.

“Presentational immediacy is our perception of the contemporary world by means of the senses” (*PR.*, p. 441).

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It does not involve any element of interpretation, and is not therefore liable to error. Our ordinary perceptual experience is always mixed up with a good deal of interpretation. We take certain things to mean certain other things. So it is very difficult to get down to the level of pure presentational immediacy. But if we could keep out all mental interference, and could attend merely to what the senses themselves declared, we should be in the mode of presentational immediacy. The point is that by presentational immediacy we are made aware of the contemporary world as illustrated, or made vivid, by certain *sensa*. While we are in this mode, we do not know what the *sensa* stand for, and we see them merely disposed in a particular manner.

Philosophers have generally taken presentational immediacy to be the primary fact in perception, and have held that whatever is to be posited in the perceived world should be derivable from this fact. In opposition to this view, Whitehead holds that presentational immediacy is not the only mode by which we know the objective world, but there is another primary mode, more fundamental than presentational immediacy, which is at the root of our all objective experience. Our ordinary perception arises out of an interplay between these two pure modes. He calls the latter mode the mode of causal efficacy. It may also be called causal feeling.

Credit must be given to Whitehead for drawing our pointed attention to this fundamental and important aspect of experience. Both Kant and Hume ignored the presence of any primary causal feeling in our experience. They did not think that causality could be felt. With Kant it was a form of thought, and with Hume it was a habit of thought.

It is true that if we confine ourselves to the evidence of presentational immediacy, we never come across any

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percept which bears the mark of causality in it; and these philosophers did not recognise any other mode. But our experience seems to show that we have clearly some feeling of causality. When in a dark room, the electric light is suddenly turned on, and a man is made to blink, his whole experience does not consist merely in seeing the flash and in the experience of blinking; but he feels the flash *making* him blink. If he were afterwards to be asked as to how he knew that the flash *made* him blink, he would surely reply that he knew because he felt it so. It is thus difficult to deny some direct feeling of causality.

Moreover, when we see a thing we not only feel the visual sensum, but we also feel that we are seeing it *with* the eye. When we taste, we feel we are tasting *with* the palate; when we smell, we feel we are smelling *with* the nose. The feeling of 'with' in respect of any sense-organ is the feeling of the causal efficacy of the sense-organ in the matter of the relevant sensum given, by presentational immediacy.

The feeling of causal efficacy appears to be present in some dim form in very low forms of animal life and even in vegetables, which give no evidence of perception in the mode of presentational immediacy. "A jellyfish advances and withdraws, and in so doing exhibits some perception of causal relationship with the world beyond itself; a plant grows downwards to the damp earth, and upwards towards the light" (*PR.*, p. 249). We have no reason to suppose that these lowly creatures ever have any definite percepts in the mode of presentational immediacy, but from the way they behave towards their surroundings, we cannot but attribute to them some dim feeling of causal relationship.

Philosophers have found it easy to ignore the feeling of causal efficacy, because they have not properly

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considered the real character of time. We know time primarily as the succession of our acts of experience, and derivatively as the succession of events objectively perceived in those acts. But there is no such thing as mere succession. Succession in the concrete is the conformation of one event to another, of the later to the earlier. There is no lapse of empty time, but only succession of events, which again means that every event is derived from its predecessor to which it conforms. The flow of time is really this causal flow of events, in which the later events have to conform to the earlier ones. The irreversibility of time means really the irreversibility of this causal relationship. The idea of empty time, or mere succession, is an abstraction from this concrete fact.

That the present is inevitably the effect of the past can be seen clearly if we consider our present state in relation to what has just gone before it. When we begin pronouncing a word, we feel compelled to finish it. In the creative advance we are rushed on from state to state, and our present being is clearly the outcome of our immediate past. And we have a deep and direct feeling of the derivation of our present state from the state which precedes it. This sense of causal derivation is apt to be missed when we spread our survey over a longer interval of time. We may not see how today is made by yesterday. But when we confine our attention to successive states, separated by the shortest possible time, we clearly see that the later state is the result of the earlier one. This we see not by any mystical insight, but by a simple direct feeling, the feeling of the derivation of our present being from our immediate past self.

This causal feeling is closely entwined with all our primitive emotions. Anger, hatred, fear, love, and hunger all involve the primitive functioning of 'retreat from' or

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'expansion towards'. They are in fact only different forms of either of these functions. But 'retreat from' or 'expansion towards' always implies some entity, other than ourselves, from which we can retreat or towards which we can expand. We cannot retreat merely from ourselves. Thus in experiencing these emotions, we clearly realise the reactions of other actual things on ourselves. We feel them in their causal efficacy in relation to our experience. When I hate, I hate a man or some other being that can causally affect me and is felt as doing so, and not a collection of sense-data that are given in presentational immediacy. It is thus clear that the feeling of causal efficacy is an element in the ultimate texture of our experience. This feeling, although always deep and inescapable, and heavy with emotion fails to win its due measure of recognition from us, because our attention is captured by the clarity and definiteness, the superficial brightness in the literal sense, of what we get in the mode of presentational immediacy.

Each of these modes has its distinctive character. The percepta in the mode of causal efficacy are vague and indistinct, not to be controlled and heavy with emotion; but the percepta in the mode of presentational immediacy are distinct and definite, and also controlable. The former mode produces a sense of derivation from the immediate past, and of passage to the immediate future, and thus gives us a distinct feeling of past or future. In the latter mode, there is no reference to past and future. Merely from a datum in presentational immediacy we have no means of knowing on which side of it lies past and on which side future. In fact whether there are such sides or directions, we cannot know in this mode. We are subject to the percepta in the mode of causal efficacy, but we can adjust our percepta in the other mode. The respective roles of these modes, as Whitehead points out, are aptly exemplified by the fact that all scientific observations are

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made in the mode of presentational immediacy, whereas all scientific theory is expressed in terms of entities that can be perceived only in the mode of causal efficacy. This brings out clearly that what we know about 'chiefly resides in those aspects of the world disclosed in causal efficacy' and what we can distinctly register is provided by the percepta in the other mode.

Let us now try to understand how symbolic reference arises out of an interplay between these two modes. In all symbolism we have two things, the symbol and the meaning. These are relative terms understood in reference to each other. In themselves, they are components of some experience, usually percepta, and are related by way of symbol and meaning in virtue of some specific function. A perceptum is a symbol when it evokes consciousness, belief and behaviour proper to another perceptum which is its meaning. The two percepta may be given in the same mode, and either of them may be used as the symbol or the meaning. But in symbolic reference we have two different species of percepta given in different modes, and what is given by presentational immediacy is used as the symbol for what is given by causal efficacy and not vice versa.

When two percepta are related as symbol and meaning, they may be spoken of as correlates. Now, "there is 'symbolic reference' between the two species when the perception of a member of one species, evokes its correlate in the other species, and precipitates upon this correlate the fusion of feelings, emotions, and derivative actions, which belong to either of the pair of correlates" (*PR.*, p. 255). That from which symbolic reference starts is the symbol and that with which it ends is the meaning.

When I see a friend coming to me and become therefore glad, what really happens is that I perceive in

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the mode of presentational immediacy some shape and colour, and this evokes in me the consciousness of my friend, belief in his near presence and the consequent gladness. The coloured shape itself, presented to sight, is not the friend who is an actual being and can be felt only by a causal feeling. The coloured shape is used as the symbol of the actual person, and the perception of it blends itself with that of the actual being given in causal efficacy. In fact, in ordinary perception, we make no distinction between the coloured shape and the actual person. This is how symbolic reference works. We project the *sensum* on to the physical nexus causally felt, and take it (the *sensum*) as the representative, in clear consciousness, of what is vaguely, but deeply, felt in causal efficacy.

Symbolic reference presupposes some definite connexion between the symbol and the meaning. We cannot symbolically refer anything to anything, but such reference is possible only between those things which have some common elements. Let us see what common elements are there between the data of causal efficacy and those of presentational immediacy.

One common ground is the presented locus. When, for instance, a grey stone is perceived, it is perceived in some spatial position. The locus of it is felt in both causal efficacy and presentational immediacy. The contemporary locus, which is presented in immediacy cannot of course be felt directly in causal efficacy, because we can causally feel only what is past, and causal independence is the very meaning of contemporaneity. The prehending subject feels its own past directly in causal feeling, but its own past is largely identical with the past of the contemporary locus. So in feeling its own past, the prehending subject feels the past of the contemporary locus also; and the contemporary locus is only a continuation of its past, and

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thus in feeling the causal past of the contemporary locus, we may be said to feel indirectly the contemporary locus itself. The locus, from the standpoint of its past or that of the prehending subject, is a real potentiality and it is perceived vaguely in causal efficacy as exemplifying those spatial relations involved in the real potentiality. In presentational immediacy, the locus is perceived directly and distinctly under the illustration of the *sensa*. Thus the locus perceived differently in the two modes is one common ground for the symbolic reference.

The datum of presentational immediacy is quite definite as regards its geometrical or spatial relations. We perceive distinctly in what geometrical relation, at least with the body, it lies. But the datum of a causal feeling lacks this distinctness. Without the assistance, given by presentational immediacy, we do not exactly know where the datum of a causal feeling is situated. Its geometrical relations never come out clearly in causal efficacy. In the case of the different parts of the body however, it is different. Here the indistinctness, to some extent at least, is removed. When we see *with* our eyes, the region of the causal efficacy (i.e. the eye) is no longer indefinite. The eye-strain, given in presentational immediacy, has, by itself, no better claim to be associated with sight than any stomach-ache which we may be feeling at the time. But the eye-strain is connected with sight, because the region defined by the feeling of the strain (in presentational immediacy) is identical with the region which is felt in its causal efficacy in the matter of sight. Thus the causal feeling, in respect to the different parts of the body, unlike an ordinary case, is able to define the geometrical relations of its data. The animal body is the central ground underlying all symbolic reference. In it the parts are defined by causal efficacy as well as by presentational immediacy, the common ground between them, the identity of the region, necessary for symbolic reference, is easily found.

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Another ground of correlation is the presence of the same eternal object or the universal in the two modes of perception. The sensum, for instance, given by the efficacy of the eye, is the same as what we perceive as illustrating the locus presented in immediacy. When we perceive a stone as grey, the eternal object grey defines the locus, presented in immediacy, as well as the sensum given by the efficacy of the eye. This identity of the eternal object correlates the datum in one mode of perception with the datum of the other mode, and on the basis of this correlation, both are blended together in symbolic reference.

We have said that the presented locus is illustrated by *sensa*, and we also say that a sensum is derived from the efficacy of a sense organ, *e.g.*, the eye. What, then, really is a sensum? A sensum is not primarily what we perceive outside. It is primarily a mode of feeling. The red we seem to see in an object is really a quality of the feeling by which the object is apprehended. Instead of saying that we feel the red in the object, we should rather say that we have a red feeling of the object. Whitehead thinks that the notion of *sensa* as forms of feelings or 'qualifications of affective tones' is fairly obvious to common sense. "A red-irritation is prevalent among nerve-racked people and among bulls (*AI.*, p. 315). Our primary experience of a sensum is that of a type of subjective feeling, but 'our developed consciousness fastens on the sensum as datum.' We begin by having a smelly feeling and it is developed by mentality into the feeling of a smell. The *sensa* are thus qualitative characters of affective tones inherent in bodily functionings, and are transmuted into characters of presented regions. The regions are perceived as associated with characters that are also shared by the subjective forms of feeling.

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In the mode of presentational immediacy the *sensa* are given for the percipient, but they are not given by the contemporary region which is seen as illustrated by them. There can be no transaction of 'give and take' between contemporary events, because they are causally independent. So if a *sensum* is to be given for an actual entity, it must be derived from its past actual occasions. The ultimate percipient occasion is somewhere in the brain, and whatever is given for it, is inherited by it, through a line of succession from its predecessors. There is "a historic route of inheritance, from actual occasion to succeeding actual occasion, first physically in the external environment, then physiologically — through the eyes in the case of visual data — up the nerves, into the brain" (*PR.*, p. 241). A shade of colour is thus first a mode of feeling in the eye. This *sensum* as a form of feeling is transmitted from occasion to occasion. And a feeling never loses its reference to the point of its origin. It has always what is called a vector character. The colour-*sensum* is a mode of feeling in the eye, but the feeling also says that it has come from an external object. Again just as the *sensa* are given, the geometrical relations are also given. This makes it possible to refer a *sensum* to a definite locus.

When we perceive a grey stone, the grey *sensum*, as a mode of feeling in the eye, is not generated by the contemporary stony occasion. We may recall here that according to Whitehead what we call a stone is properly a historic route of stony occasions, and that whatever is derived or inherited from it must be due to the past actual occasions in the route and not to its contemporary member. The line of inheritance starts from some past actual occasion in the region of the stone, and ends with the concrescence of an actual occasion in the brain which is the percipient subject. The line takes a critical turn at the retina, from where a new kind of occasions begin to

propagate themselves. The percipient occasion inherits and absorbs in the first instance all that has come from this long line of succession. In a supplemental stage, in virtue of the originative power of the concrescent percipient, the locus of the stone and the feeling in the eye (the grey sensum) are given particular prominence, because the line of inheritance started from that locus and it took a critical turn at the eye; and the locus and the sensum appear as blended together.

The contemporary region is not actually a datum in any feeling. It is a 'real potentiality' for the earlier occasions which are actually felt. The extensive relations, which define the actual occasions constituting the contemporary region, are what were 'really possible' for their predecessors which are actually felt. By transmutation this possibility appears as an actuality, and the ungiven contemporary appears as given. The term stone which stands for the historic route of stony occasions, is applied also to the presented locus, because it is assumed that the historic route is continued up to the contemporary region.

We have said that in presentational immediacy the contemporary region appears under the illustration of a sensum. Whether there is anything actual behind this appearance or whether it is a mere empty appearance is not disclosed in this mode. It is by symbolic reference that the sensum is joined to the actual entity, which is causally felt, or to its contemporary representative. We have to do here with the locus and the sensum. The locus is determined by its geometrical relationships. These relationships are also felt in the body. Whitehead calls such feelings 'strains'. So what we are concerned with in a perception of this kind is a certain state of geometrical strain in the body together with a certain qualitative physiological excitement in the cells of the body. "The

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geometrical details of the projected sense-perception depend on the geometrical strains in the body, the qualitative sensa depend on the physiological excitements of the requisite cells in the body" (*PR.*, p. 178).

We thus see that 'the perceptions are functions of the bodily states'. What we primarily apprehend are the parts of the body entertaining feelings of different kinds (that is, as differently affected). These feelings in different parts of the body bear evidence of their origin, i.e., have a vector character. And these are later on elaborated, through presentational immediacy and symbolic reference, into perceptions of external objects.

There is no mistake in any of the two pure modes. What is causally felt or inherited from the settled past is clearly what is so inherited. The datum here by definition is a fact. What is perceived in presentational immediacy also admits of no doubt. In this mode, we have merely the presentation of a locus illustrated by a sensum. If I see a grey region in front of me, there can be nothing wrong merely in my enjoying the sensum in that region, whether or not there be anything like a stone in that place. Nothing is presupposed in this mode as to the presence or absence of any actual entity at the place which is seen under the illustration of the sensum. We lay ourselves open to error only when we are led by symbolic reference and make what we perceive in presentational immediacy interpretative of what we feel in causal efficacy.

And yet symbolic reference is not an act of conscious interpretation. "The two modes are unified by a blind symbolic reference by which supplemental feelings derived from the intensive, but vague, mode of efficacy are precipitated upon the distinct regions illustrated in the mode of immediacy" (*PR.*, p. 254). By this integration of two modes, what is intensely but vaguely felt (in the mode

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of efficacy) is made distinct and clear, and what is felt clearly but without depth (in the mode of immediacy) is made deep and intense.

The symbolic reference is so natural and instinctive that it is always difficult to discern what is really given in the pure mode of immediacy. The supplemental feelings, derived from the primary data of the causal feeling, are not due to any conscious process, but only to bodily functions. The symbolic reference or perception in the mixed mode is right when the feelings produced by the bodily functions are relevant to the real state of external things. There is error when the feelings have but slight reference to the real state of things. Perceptual error thus is not due to any intellectual defect but only to a faulty bodily mechanism. The rightness or wrongness of a perception cannot be discerned in the act of perception itself. It can be determined only by pragmatic tests.

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We ended our article[†] on Whitehead's theory of perception by saying that the rightness or wrongness of a perception is to be determined by pragmatic tests. From the point of view of knowledge the rightness or wrongness of a perception is its truth or falsehood. And the question at once suggests itself whether the meaning of truth itself is pragmatic. Whitehead goes so far as to admit that "it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the very meaning of truth is pragmatic" (*PR.*,* p. 255). But he rightly points out that "though the statement is *hardly* an exaggeration, still it *is* an exaggeration." We must then enquire what exactly is the meaning of truth in Whitehead's philosophy.

The idea of truth becomes significant when a distinction has emerged between reality and appearance. "Reality is just itself, and it is nonsense to ask whether it be true or false" (*Al.*,** p. 309). We can however ask about an appearance whether it is true or false. But what is reality? and what is appearance?

The settled past, the stubborn fact, the given actual world, from which an actual occasion takes its rise, is the reality for that occasion. We know that the concrescence of an actual occasion begins by entertaining as objective contents the already constituted actualities falling within its actual world. For every actual occasion there is some given settled fact from which it arises and to which it has to conform. For it this is the reality.

† *The Philosophical Quarterly*, October, 1935. [In this volume Essay 24]

• *PR* = *Process and Reality*

** *Al* = *Adventures of Ideas*

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But an actual occasion is not wholly under the domination of its predecessors; it is not merely a creature of the past. It has its own originaive freedom in virtue of which it effects new syntheses of the contents received from the antecedent world. By its conceptual activities it invests the given world with a novel aspect. Thus, for instance, by integrating a physical feeling with a conceptual feeling, a nexus of actual entities, at first physically felt, is made to appear in the light of a proposition. The nexus undergoes a transformation of character when it becomes a factor in a proposition. In symbolic reference or what we call sense-perception, a region appears under the aspect of some *sensa* which are derived primarily from the subjective feelings of the percipient subject. At least the region appears with qualities that were not given in the primary physical feelings of the actual entities which constitute the region.

We see thus that there is a difference between the objective contents received in the initial stage by an actual occasion, from its antecedent world, and the objective contents which result from the various acts of coordination and supplementation performed by the actual occasion upon the initial data. The contents received in the physical pole do not remain entirely unchanged when they have been worked upon by the mental pole. We have seen that at least in the case of higher grades of actual occasions, the objective contents, initially received in the physical pole, are greatly transformed by the contributions received from the mental pole. By appearance we understand the latter aspect of the objective contents when they have been worked upon by the mental pole. In the first phase, an actual occasion is confronted with reality, but at the end the reality is transformed into appearance through the ideal

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activities of its mental pole. Thus if reality means merely the actual in appearance we have a fusion of the ideal with the actual.

From the fact that appearance is due to the activities of the mental pole, we can easily see that there can be no effective appearance for organisms that are possessed of a very low grade of mentality. Thus in the inorganic world, where the physical feelings are all-important, that is where physical influences are merely received and transmitted, with practically no addition from the operation of the mental pole, we have no reason to suppose that there are any effective appearances.

In our case however, especially in our conscious perceptions, appearance is of dominating importance, so much so that many people have supposed that we have acquaintance with reality only through appearance. We have seen that this is not the case. We know reality more deeply in our causal feelings than through appearance. But it cannot be denied that if clearness and distinctness is the ideal of knowledge, it is fulfilled only in the case of appearance.

Two points of distinction between appearance and reality may be mentioned here. First, reality, as felt, is in the past, whereas appearance is in the present. The second point of distinction is that appearance is simpler than reality. There is an element of transmutation in every appearance. What is complex in reality becomes simple in appearance. A region appears as one and undivided, while in reality it is made up of many actualities which are distinct from one another. Whitehead therefore says that "appearance is an incredibly simplified edition of reality" (*Al.*, p. 273).

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The qualification of truth or falsehood is properly applicable to appearance, according as it conforms or does not conform to reality. We have to note here that the truth relation is not between subjective knowledge and objective content, but between two objective contents, when one of them conforms to the other. Reality is an objective content, so is appearance, and they are combined in a truth-relation when appearance conforms to reality.

But what is the meaning of conformation here? One thing may be said to conform to another when there is a common element present in them both. Without referring to appearance in particular, Whitehead defines the truth relation generally in the following way. When two objects are such that neither is a component of the other and their composite natures include a common factor, then they can be said to have a truth-relation to each other. Or, as he says, "A truth-relation will be said to connect the objective contents of two prehensions when one and the same identical pattern can be abstracted from both of them" (*Al.*, p. 310). We know that reality is prehended in the first phase and appearance in a later phase, and they are in a truth-relation when both reality and appearance severally participate in the same pattern. When this is the case, it is evident that our knowledge about one of the facts in a truth-relation involves knowledge about the other fact also, so far as the truth-relation extends.

We do not know truth by itself; we know only of a truth relation. When we say that an appearance is true, all that we mean is that the appearance sustains a truth-relation, as defined above, with the reality which underlies it or from which it has been derived.

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Propositions and sense-perception provide two conspicuous examples of truth-relation, understood in the above sense. We have said that truth is to be understood in connexion with appearance. And in the case of propositions we have not, it is true, the sort of appearance that is available in the case of sense-perception. Still we have to recognise that a proposition is an extreme case of appearance. The actual entities, which are the logical subjects of a proposition, are 'conceived in the guise of illustrating the predicate.' As factors in a proposition they are not felt in their real actual character, but only as a field for the realisation of a possibility. They are felt, as it were, with the shade of a possibility colouring their being.

A proposition is true when it has the truth-relation with the nexus which provides its logical subjects. That is to say, if the eternal object, which is the predicate of a proposition, is really exemplified in the nexus then the proposition is true. The same pattern, which is realised in the logical subjects, constituting the nexus, must appear as the predicate, if the proposition is to be true.

We should not however suppose that, in the case of a true proposition since its predicate is realised in the nexus, the proposition itself becomes identified with the nexus. That is not possible. The nexus and the proposition belong to two different categories of being. The nexus is a group of actual entities, and the proposition is a possibility, although its range is confined to the nexus. The proposition is a theory, a supposition, about actualities, and is not itself an actuality. The pattern occurs in the nexus in the mode of realisation. It is actually embodied there. But in the proposition, it stands for a possibility only although of a limited scope. It is what may be realised in the subjects indicated. Thus the pattern, as it occurs in the proposition,

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has a hypothetical character, and defines a mere possibility, whereas in the nexus it defines a fact. We cannot therefore identify a proposition with a nexus even when the proposition is true.

For our experience, sense-perception provides the best type of appearance. The appearance we meet with here is no longer tinged with a hypothetical character. Although the *sensa* are derived from bodily activities in the past, they are precipitated upon the contemporary regions, and the regions present the appearance that they are qualified by the *sensa*. Truth or falsity belongs to this appearance according as it conforms or does not conform to the reality. But there are different ways of conforming, direct and indirect, and in various degree. We thus see that although Whitehead accepts what may be called a correspondence theory of truth, he is willing to admit degrees and kinds in truth.

There is a direct conformation between the appearance and the reality—and it gives us the first species of truth—when the *sensa*, which qualify a region, also qualify the actual entities which make up the region. We have to recall here that the *sensa* are primarily ways of feeling. Our seeing of anything as red really means our feeling the thing redly. Since *sensa* really qualify only the modes of feeling, when they appear to qualify an external region, the question arises whether they actually qualify the affective tones of the actual entities which make up the region. If they do, then the appearance is true, because it conforms to the underlying reality.

Sense-perception may give us another species of truth, when it need not strictly correspond to the underlying reality. The sense-perception may result from the normal

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functioning of a healthy normal body and the body may, in its functioning, so conform to the external environment that its reactions to it are favourable to its self-preservation as well as to the preservation of the species to which it belongs. In a perception of this kind, we have a truth, for we have perceived what another individual of our species would perceive under the same circumstances. Since the perception results from the normal functioning of a healthy normal body, it presupposes some conformation between the environment and the functions of the body. So there is some truth. But the appearance may not really reflect the actual happenings in the region where it is seen. Hence the truth relation here is less direct than in the first species.

There is yet another type of truth which may be called symbolic. It is the sort of truth we get in the case of language in relation to its meaning. There is no causal relation between the heard sounds or visible signs on paper and the meanings or propositions for which they stand. There is no direct relation between the appearance of sights or sounds and the reality of meanings. Still the appearance may sustain a truth-relation if for a properly qualified percipient, the prehension of the appearance means the prehension of the reality, if, that is, one gets to know the meaning by hearing or reading the language. There is truth or falsity of this type in all kinds of symbolism.

There may be all kinds of indirect truth with their delicate nuances in our various experiences. But what we really want, when we interest ourselves in the question of truth, is the 'blunt truth' of the first sort, and the question at once arises whether and how far it is available in sense-perception. When we see a green meadow, and believe the appearance to be true, is it really the case that greenness qualifies in a dominant manner the affective

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tones of the actualities which make up the meadow? Can the happenings within the regions of the blades of grass be said, in any important sense, to correspond exactly to the appearance which those regions present to our eyes?

It may be at once admitted that there is no necessity that the appearance in our perception should in every case correspond to fact. There are any number of cases of delusive appearance, and they clearly show that the happenings within the regions are oftentimes irrelevant to their appearance. But we need not give ourselves up to utter scepticism. We know that sense-perceptions are due to our bodily functionings, and that these functionings and the happenings within the contemporary regions are equally derived from a common past. It may not be too much to believe that our bodies are attuned to external regions, so that under normal conditions, our bodily functionings have their counterparts in the happenings within those regions, and therefore, the appearances of those regions, controlled as they are by our bodily functionings, do really correspond to the actualities within the regions. When there is perfect adjustment between the body and the external environment, the appearances may be true. We cannot however think that our bodies have reached the ideal stage of perfect adjustment. But if we look to the teleology of the universe, we may be assured that the production of such perfect adjustment is part of the aim of the creative advance.

Truth by itself is no value, and is not self-justified. That exalted status, of being something that requires no external justification and claims realisation for its own sake, belongs to beauty. The concept of beauty is more comprehensive than the concept of truth. Truth concerns the relation between appearance and reality. But in the

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case of beauty, the inter-relations of different elements of appearance and the inter-relations of different elements of reality as well as the relations of appearance and reality are concerned. Truth is valuable when it subserves the purpose of beauty. And it is because truth really performs an important function in the service of beauty that it is considered valuable for its own sake. There may be a beauty concerned merely with appearance, but such beauty is shallow. When it has the harmonious backing of reality and therefore possesses the quality of truth, it gains in depth and effectiveness. If Whitehead is right in believing that "The technology of the Universe is directed to the production of Beauty" (*Al.*, p. 341), we may then conclude that the creative process is equally concerned in eliminating all those conditions which make for disagreement between appearance and reality and thus in attaining greater and greater measure of truth. For the ideal beauty, which will mean all comprehensive harmony, cannot be attained while there are appearances which do not conform to reality.

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